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ISLAFORD,

AND

OTHER POEMS:

A BOOK FOR

WINTER EVENINGS AND SUMMER MOODS.

BY

GEORGE MURRAY.

"Poetry is the communion of an individual heart with the heart  
universal—the Great Heart of Humanity."—PREFACE.

SMITH, ELDER, AND CO., LONDON: OLIVER AND BOYD,  
EDINBURGH: GEORGE AND ROBERT KING, ABERDEEN.

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TO

THOMAS A. DUFF, ESQ.,  
OF HADDO.

AND TO

MRS. DUFF,

THIS VOLUME,

AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WHAT MAY BE TERMED

THE

GREAT UNPAYABLE DEBT OF GRATITUDE,

IS

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## PREFACE.

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THE question, What is Poetry ? has been so often, and so often ill-naturedly, asked, that an attempt to answer it by the humble writer of these pages, might seem incompatible with the modesty of a maiden-authorship, and be received only as evidence of ignorance, inexperience, or presumption ; for both poet and prose-man have done the same so often with so little satisfaction that an inquiry into the circumstance and cause of their failure, must be regarded as the most probable preliminary of a more hopeful investigation : this is not a task either for a young author or a preface. It might be unfair to attribute the failure of the essayist to a want of sympathy with his subject, though this is so far true that one of the most original prose-thinkers of our age, somewhere asserts that poetry has no fixed principles, and is therefore undefinable ; but the want

of success in the other is undoubtedly involved in the fact that, what he adduces as a definition is generally—and perhaps by design—so poetically expressed, that we are constrained to look on it rather as a specimen of his individual effort and ability than a definition of his art. But simpler definitions of the art are not wanting. It has been, intelligibly enough, termed “the language of feeling.” This is true, but not all the truth we desiderate: poetry is always the language of feeling, but the language of feeling is not always poetry. There is a story told of a dissenting clergyman north of the Dee, who, at the desire of his flock, sent one of his sermons to the press, which proved so feelingly exclamatory, that less than a sheet of it exhausted the printer’s stock of O’s; yet the discourse certainly had not been written under the inspiration of any muse. To complete this definition then, we propose to add another clause in answer to the question, To whom is this language to be addressed? The preacher alluded to, though literally exclaiming the printer out of breath, wanted the necessary depth of heart to make an uncircumscribed appeal to the sympathies of his fellow-men: he spoke the language of feeling, but it was only heard by his immediate audience. Let us turn to the other

hand and listen—that voice sounding among the mountains like the trumpet of God itself; it comes from a Vates—one gifted with both prophecy and song; he does not merely speak to his congregation, but *through* them to their countrymen, and through *them* to the ends of the earth: the scene is Wales; the preacher is Jeremy Taylor.

Poetry, then, is the language of feeling thus spoken: or, it is the communion of an individual heart with the heart universal—the Great Heart of Humanity. Compositions bearing this stamp of universal sympathy will always be rare, but the proximity of their approach must determine the degree of excellence which they have attained.

There is nothing in this volume, its author is deeply sensible, belonging to the grand or the sublime, either in sentiment, description, or versification; but, because he knows that it contains nothing of a forced, sickly, or hot-house raising—because he believes that even the insect-productions of annuals and newspapers have their value, and enter the juices which nourish the body of the age—and because his contributions to the public reading through this channel have been good-naturedly received, he ventures to present them in a collected form, accompanied by some things of a closer and

more continuous texture and a more determined bearing on the moralities of life.

The moralities of life: for, admitting the above definition of poetry, it will be seen that nothing immoral ought to be spoken of under the name. Whatever appeals to universal sympathy must be a thing that endureth for ever: this is the secret of a poet's deathlessness; his sentiments mingle with the great principles of a virtuous life, and live by reason of *their* vitality. Corruption—wherever it exists, or however it may be gilded—vanity, blasphemy, error, and whatsoever maketh or loveth a lie, all must be swept away in the improveability of our nature; for when humanity becomes all-human, which is the nearest approach it can make to the Divine, how could it retain the livery it wore when half a fiend?

The great name of our native land—Robert Burns—has been often mentioned of late to prove the questionable morality of genius. To those that are so fond of sweeping the sooty corners of a fellow-sinner's heart it is of little avail to read a lesson of charity; but though they neither walk humbly nor love mercy they may be willing to do justice. We would then counsel them thus: If ye will judge your fellow-men, let the rule of our Master be your guide—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Burns, indeed, wrote "Holy Willie's Prayer," and

“The Ordination,” and “The Calf,” but these were the thorns, not the fruits of genius. It may be the tree produced many such, and some excrescences besides which all of us could have wished away; but He that said, “Judge by the fruit,” pointed out the only way by which criticism of any kind can become a labour of love, viz., by making the good that a man has done the criterion of his good name. Thus, if we mistake not, the philosophy of Carlyle is as old as the New Testament, and essentially contained in the text we have quoted.

There is much false criticism abroad, both in the walks of morals and literature. Our boyhood is drilled to admire the magnanimity of Cincinnatus retiring from the dictatorship to the plough. This was undoubtedly grand: but there is a sublimer story told of one that ploughed our native soil, who was summoned from his plough by a republic more extensive, and far more glorious than the Roman ever was, to wit, the Republic of Letters,—yet the return of the Ayrshire peasant from the first circles of the first city in Europe to his plough and his Jean is comparatively unremarked and unknown! And he who is stigmatized for immorality forgot both his glory and his wrongs and married the humble woman, “because,” says he, “I had the

happiness of a fellow-creature in my keeping, and could not trifle with the sacred deposit!"

To return more immediately to the subject of this preface: it may be proper to mention that most of the minor poems in the volume were composed without reference to the public eye, or the intention of meeting it. Few of them are autobiographical and none of them, it is trusted, indelicately so; for the author has been careful to suppress whatever seemed egotistical in his verses. Autobiographical poetry, moreover, is open to this objection, that, while assuming to be the glowing expression of present feelings, it is generally elaborate and retrospective; generated in the calm which ensues when the feelings it describes have subsided, such verses are more the resurrection and the ghost than the life and reality of passion, and spring from its grave into a fluttering existence, like the birds from the grave of Memnon. Accordingly the reader will find few records of misfortune in a book which professes to be adapted only to winter-evenings when they bring with them summer-moods. But though the present candidate for public favour prefers no claim on the sympathy of his readers in this way, remembering that the lines of Gray, which have become too trite to be quoted, are the expression of a great truth, it were sometimes beneficial

to others—always to ourselves—to inquire what those deserts are in which, and in spite of which, the flowers of genius bloom, and how much they have to sweeten and purify in the atmosphere that surrounds them; or, taking the other illustration, to sound that sea of trouble which has gathered over the gems.

But if there is one point of view from which, more than another, the author of *Islaford* could wish his book to be scanned, it is from the fireside and the rural abode; or where the freshness of his description, however inferior to that of his subject, may prove itself to be of a congenial kind. As the humble interpreter of quiet Nature—as a professor of signs and seasons, and days and years, he commits himself, with some little confidence, to the reader that loves to find a flower with more than a vegetable life in it—to hear the old trees clap their dripping hands in the wind after a shower—to gaze on the mountain's almost-intellectual brow or the great river that walks off like an ocean—to admire the fervid sunset, or the watch-worn face of dawn—in short, who loves all things that can be mentioned with a loving epithet. Such a one will see no presumption in giving to this little book the title it bears. Shakspeare grandly tells us that the poet's eye rolls in a fine frenzy from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven: the

eye that rolls with brotherly kindness from man to man, and from man in darkness and doubt to Man Millennial—that eye has a humble inspiration also. The writer of the Address to the Sun, in *Paradise Lost*, was a poet; and he that did not look so loftily, but dropped his eyes on the ground, and first called a small gowan the Day's Eye—he was a poet too. Do not conceive that there is any arrogance in speaking of great men in this little way: their writings, *opera sunt*, are works; this, *opera est*, is an endeavour.

In conclusion: the author has nothing to offer his critics for the mitigation of their rigour, because he intends to avail himself of their suggestions. The hand that holds the extinguisher is as gentle as it is powerful; and if its power is to be exercised on his humble volume, he has only to say, that he shall stay no longer in the walk he has chosen than he discovers his unfitness to tread it. If he has mistaken taste for power—the enjoyment of poetry for the faculty of producing it—he shall give up the attempt, and, while others more fortunate and gifted are permitted to enter, content himself with a seat, like the beggar in the Acts, at the Beautiful gate of the Temple.

ABERDEEN, 25th Dec., 1844.



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# ISLAFORD.

A TALE ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR MY PUPILS.

---

## PART FIRST.

“WHAT is the charm that drives dull hours away,  
And makes the day of work a holiday?”

My pupils ask,—and, lest their plot should fail,  
Some bolder urchin shouts “A tale, a tale!”

Clustering like the clusters of a vine,  
They gather round me. How young faces shine,  
Ere the new gloss has left them, or the eye—  
A fragment snatched from heaven’s inmost sky—  
Begun to lose its violet, for the blue  
Of a less winning and more worldly hue!  
Childhood and Innocence!—that tongue doth rave,  
Which says of man when drooping to the grave,  
O’erlaid with heavy age and heavier sin,  
That then his second childhood doth begin!  
O happy time, when smiles have no deceit—  
Words no more meanings than a lambkin’s bleat;

When the young breast bounds lighter for its load,  
And, pleased with life, forgets the dirty road ;  
Before it feels one string of life decay,  
Or learns that friends are things which pass away !  
O children, though I pray your various races  
May find paths smooth and shining as your faces,  
Yet there are roughnesses on this green ball  
Of earth that make me tremble for you all !  
Grim years will come, and cares that eat like rust  
Into the shining cheek ; and passion's gust  
May overthrow a world of hopes : and time  
Fills the black-lettered calendar of crime  
With names as spotless once, and once as dear,  
And once as happy too, as any here.  
Oh, shun deception ! He—and none but he—  
Is truly blest whose life's a verity,  
For, taken in the moral light of duty,  
A straight line is the only "line of beauty ;"  
And even a secret's best concealed, in sooth,  
When only hid beneath a fold of truth.

## I.

A form like Rachel's made the damsel fair,  
To make her good the soul of Ruth was there ;  
For none that saw young Ada Rose e'er knew  
A thing too comely to compare her to.  
Her brow was like a wreath of mountain-snow,  
With two sweet harebells peeping out below ;  
Her cheek, that seemed of summer sunsets wove,  
Had smiles that saints in sight of heaven would love ;

And as the dimple on a well doth show  
The fountain-freshness springing up below,  
That dimpling cheek spoke pleasure bubbling free  
From a young heart, like joy from purity !

## II.

Her father, being a widower and blind,  
Received much kindness, and was very kind ;  
The iron that entered, had not scarred, his heart,—  
For suffering seldom acts a callous part :  
But rivers wander ere they reach the sea,  
And minds before they join eternity.

John Rose had been for many trying years  
A parish minister ; and his compeers  
Have not forgot how faithful to his cure—  
How good to all, and gracious to the poor—  
How truly earnest in his Master's cause—  
How lamb-like in his shepherd-care he was !  
For till his reason had its latest shock,  
He fed and fathered all his little flock.

## III.

It was the time when some few acts of state  
Had made an era in our country's fate,  
When troops of change her holiest spots o'erran,  
And Catholic-liberation led the van.  
The manner of the good old man grew strange,  
Though Ada was the last to see the change ;  
But when she found him crazed as well as blind—  
The gentlest being sometimes is unkind—

And heard his daily talk, and nightly dreams,  
Of licensed Popery, and some hideous schemes  
For flinging Freedom's pearls to dangerous men,  
And bringing beads and missals back again;—  
She, ignorant of the logician's laws,  
Mistook the effect of madness for its cause,  
And thought on Catholicism and Catholics too  
With as much harshness as her nature knew.

## IV.

But some green feelings beautified and twined  
Around the ruins of his shattered mind.  
He had his daily walk as heretofore,  
And Ada led, and thought she loved him more :  
Nay, when the heartless, heavy fit had gone,  
He seemed more cheerful than ere it came on.  
At times, and when his mind was most deranged,  
He'd fancy she—and she alone—was changed,  
And finger o'er her features, like a lute,—  
But never found one chord of feeling mute.  
And something kin to music must have dwelt  
Upon her smiling face, for, as he felt  
The depth of dimple curling in her smile,  
It soothed and made him quiet for a while.

## V.

One morning as they sauntered forth together,  
And spoke of sunny skies, and summer weather—  
And wondered what the inner heaven would be,  
When even the outer shone so gloriously—



A stranger joined them unawares, the tone  
Of whose salute made the old man his own ;  
Although his daughter heard it with a start,  
And walked with downcast eyes and beating heart.  
Yet, sooth to say, it was a pleasant walk,  
For sire and stranger soon were deep in talk :  
The former, zealous always, and sincere—  
The latter, gentle, musical, and clear  
(Like summer rivers,)—turning o'er the page  
Of history with the finger of a sage ;  
But, like the seer, still finding fullest scope  
Within the dreamy world-to-come of hope.  
This pleased the good old man, and thus he spoke  
To Ada :—" Child, the stranger's words have broke  
Upon me like a vision—come at last,  
And wished for long—no vision of the past.  
The past is always with us, like the poor ;  
Its page is full, and legible, and sure ;—  
And even the future gives me little care ;  
For it is guaranteed by hope and prayer—  
And, thanks to God, I still can hope and pray.  
But this has been a vision of to-day—  
A world of life and action, into which  
I have no feelers now, alas ! to reach  
For information : yet I would not fix,  
Even if I could, thy thoughts on politics ;  
Although their various bearings and events  
Might be discussed by heaven-translated saints."

## VI.

Durn Cottage-gate showed its white arms at last,  
And Ada wished they had not walked so fast.  
She scarcely ventured to look up till now—  
Heavens ! what a noble amplitude of brow !  
And from his paleness—though no sickly pale—  
She knew his heart had also had its ail ;  
And on his brow one folding wrinkle told  
That it had grief untimely to unfold :  
It was not age—for he was in his prime—  
But cut by more unfeeling things than Time.  
And then his eye—Oh ! it is in the eyes  
That the soul trims her wings before she flies ;  
'Tis there that Grief sits darkest when we grieve,  
And Reason lingers when about to leave :  
The stranger's had a deep, but restless fire,  
That flickered as if ready to expire.

## VII.

Ada was strangely silent all that day,  
And thought, poor girl, 'twould never pass away ;  
For many a troubled thought her bosom tore,  
And sad anxieties unknown before.  
Night came ; but sleep, that loves the easy chair,  
Too oft forgets to lock the lids of care.  
On Ada's couch—no more a downy bed—  
Reclined, but not reposed, a weary head ;  
For in her broken sleep, the sighs she drew  
Showed that her heart was almost broken too.

## VIII.

Star after star had set, and morning's beams  
Illumed the sleeper's couch, but not her dreams :  
Visions so sad, yet of such real seeming,  
She never had :—Is there no fate in dreaming ?  
In visions hitherto her father's sight  
Had been restored and reason's better light ;  
But other beings reigned in Dreamland now—  
The fiery eye, pale cheek, and noble brow.  
O sleep, thou art no synonyme for rest !  
Pale as the pillow that her cheek had pressed  
She 'woke, and blamed the garish light of day—  
The stranger, not her love, had passed away.

## IX.

What meant this agony she well could guess,  
And shuddered at her own heart's wilfulness.  
Last morning's incident served to discover  
How promptly nature makes a maid a lover ;  
But what could this mysterious passion mean  
For one unknown, and—save a glance—unseen ?  
A phantom-cloud that melted in her gaze,  
Which, once beheld, must haunt her all her days !  
A face that floated past her in a stream,  
But left not even a name to guide her dream !  
She called it foolishness, she called it fate ;  
She felt the passion illegitimate :  
The pangs of love, without its hope, she knew,  
And all its heartburn, with its heartbreak too.

## X.

Then passed some gloomy days, till, one fair morn,  
A breeze was sailing o'er the waving corn,  
And wiped the chill, wet cheeks of blades and flowers,  
Diffusing so much joy after the showers,  
That all the old trees, on Durn's tree-peopled lands,  
Looked young again, and clapped their dripping  
hands.

Ada, although too sick at heart for talk,  
Had with her sire resumed their wonted walk ;  
And earnestly the good old man had pressed  
To know the secret of so much unrest ;  
And yet himself had rested just as ill.  
This she observed, and bade her heart " be still,"  
And blamed herself for giving him new fears,  
And read reproaches in the piteous tears  
That gathered in his strange white eyes, whene'er  
He turned—as oft he did—their orbs to her.

## XI.

It took an effort—smiles are hard to force—  
But to see old age weeping thus was worse ;  
And, while resolving that she would be gay,  
To assist her, who arrives, but Ellen Hay!  
Ellen and she were cousins " by their sires,"  
And sisters—by themselves. The electric-wires  
Of relative, friend, schoolmate, confidant,  
And (both being motherless) their common want  
Made their communications always quick—  
Especially since the old man was lunatic.

But in the friends was something to contrast :  
Ada was still and calm—bird-Ellen, wild and fast.  
Her very gait betrayed a bounding joy ;  
Her mirth was like the romping of a boy ;  
Her cheek outshone the summer-shine of flowers ;  
Her life had been a flight of happy hours,  
With one dark break, where Death's cold shadow  
fell—

In her best moments, yet, remembered well.  
In Ada's breast all virtues grew and seeded ;  
In Ellen's, chiefly those the world most heeded :  
For Ada Rose, a heaven on earth was she !  
And Ellen Hay, an earth in heaven would be !

## XII.

She came to inform her Rose that Islaford,  
A neighbouring estate, had changed its lord ;  
And how a maid might profit by the change,  
(As she herself intended ;) but, 'twas strange,  
The squire, though all that woman-hearts admire—  
Romantic, young, and wealthy—for a squire—  
Not all the arts by woman practised could  
Extract the hermit from his solitude.  
'Tis pity such sage converse should be broke,  
But the door-bell rang merrily as she spoke ;  
And only they that look and long can tell  
What music's in the voice of such a bell.  
Bird-Ellen heard a bridal in the peal ;  
But how shall language Ada's thoughts reveal  
When the door opened, and her bosom's lord  
Again appeared—young Rae, the laird of Islaford !

## PART SECOND.



THERE seems a vintage in the western sky,  
Where day is dying, as May-days should die ;  
For the sun sets in such a glow to-night,  
As if he rather melted into light  
Than set ; while all the clouds of heaven receive  
Their legacies of splendour from the eve,  
And gleam like fragments of the cloud that rode,  
When Israel marched, before the host of God.  
Yon mountain, rushing like a promontory  
Into the sea of air, hath caught a glory :  
Upon its ridge the shepherd-swain is seen,  
His flock in groups hide all its spots of green,  
And the small dog that guards the precipices  
Stalketh in brightness round the golden fleeces.  
But this is over, and the mountain brown  
Feels, in its highest peak, the sun is down—

Who never set more beautifully bright,  
When earth was Eden, than he did to-night.

Now every creature owns the time of rest ;  
The gorgeous clouds have saddened, and the west  
Is pale as young cheeks after passion are ;  
And o'er the glimmering heaven, star by star,  
Like sympathetic writ, grows legible—  
Each small, and smooth, and shining like a shell  
Left on the margin of Creation's sea,  
Wherever its vast waters have been free.  
Mysterious orbs, like dreams ye must be read—  
Always most strange when best interpreted !

## I.

We hear it mooted that if man were sure  
Of all he wishes, none could be more poor ;  
That in Life's chase, the huntsman is a clown,  
Who for enjoyment runs poor Pleasure down :  
Such droppings of uncertainty and fear  
Are needed in the cup of blessing here.  
Some joys, 'tis said, are joyfulest in catching—  
And soft looks dearest when stern eyes are watching ;  
And thus, however pleasant at one's breast,  
We play with Love a little ere we press't.

## II.

Allan and Ada met and—thought they loved,  
Parted and—knew it. After which they roved,  
If not in company or concert, yet  
With hope of meeting—and, of course, they met :

Two fine chords in a perfect unison,  
 They saw that neither cared to be alone ;  
 But, when they parted, any eye might see  
 They really cared much less for company.

## III.

A sunny life they led by wood and stream,  
 In stirring joy, though noiseless as a dream,  
 Believing earth as blest as earth shall be  
 When wanting nought of Heaven save Heaven's  
                   eternity !

They loved all gentle things : the lambs that flee,  
 Like fleecy clouds, across the dewy lea ;  
 The birds that sport, as gamesomely as they,  
 In morning air, or on the leafy spray ;  
 The bee that swingeth in the buttercup ;  
 The trout that in the sunshine leapeth up ;—  
 And well they loved the merry, mocking breeze  
 That chased itself around and round the trees,  
 And laughed and sighed as often in a minute  
 As they, the lovers did, who cooled their hot cheeks  
                   in it.

'Twas like a lonely child that knoweth none  
 Of all its games, that can be played alone,  
 And therefore must contrive to play all parts in  
                   one. }

## IV.

They loved all trees—the slight-clad lady birch ;  
 The light pagoda-structure of the larch ;  
 The oak patrician ; and, that minister  
 Of household duties, the plebeian fir ;



The spruce, whose boughs (though tipped with  
golden growths,  
Spring's finger-ends,) look grave as they whose troths  
Were plighted underneath them yesterday ;  
Ash, elm, and all—all lonely shades loved they.

## V.

They loved all rural flowers ; and Allan knew  
Their family-secrets : harebells meek and blue, }  
The mountain's maiden eyes ; the violet ever true ; }  
The briar-rose that just begins to pout  
Its pretty lip, and from its bud looks out ;  
The yellow primroses, cosily pressed,  
Like unfledged birdlings, in a grassy nest ;  
Furze, broom, and heath, a trio which if new  
Would be adored ; the cheerful daisy, too,  
That gathereth its crimson tips together  
When rains descend, and blusheth for the weather.

## VI.

And when they chose to linger in a nook  
Of shady luxury, there was a book—  
(A silent friend, and deaf as well as dumb,)  
Opened at random, careless what might come ;  
Perchance a ballad that our grand-dames sung,  
Time-blest and ancient—nay, the ever-young,—  
A tale to keep the tender heart alive,  
Or verse to teach the down-held how to strive.  
Such was their reading when they could not walk ;  
And if they could not read, they still could talk ;

Talk by the babbling brook—a babbler which  
(Might hence be guessed,) ne'er rattles overmuch.  
Of much they spoke; of friendships many a one,  
Of hopes, of loves,—but never of their own;  
Yet every—even the veriest wayside—greeting,  
From this time forth, became a lover's meeting.

## VII.

One summer evening, exquisitely fair,  
While old John Rose was dozing in his chair,  
His daughter sat beside the window sill  
And watched the big moon coming o'er the hill,  
With eyes that sucked her nun-like beauty in,  
Until their tears were streaming o'er her chin.  
“Dear Rae,” she cried, (for Allan Rae was there,)  
“Was ever sky so fine, or moon so fair!  
If one could see a coinage of the sky,  
When newly struck in the almighty die,  
Before the superscription and impress  
Of potency combined with graciousness,  
Were dimmed by sin, or worn by misery,  
Yon moon's fair silver such a coin would be!  
Yet some, elsewhere the gayest of the gay,  
Grow over-sad at times beneath her ray,—  
And I am one of these; for she was clad  
With memories long ago, that made me sad.  
But new associations greet me now;—  
O lady of the pale and peerless brow,  
I gaze upon thee till my heart grows sick,—  
Thou tell'st me that my sire's a lunatic!”

## VIII.

“ For Heaven’s sake, Ada !—for thy own—forbear  
Such hideous words, and doff that frightful air !  
Thy sire and all things shall be blither soon ;  
Far happier tales are told us by the moon.  
The peasant lover walks beneath her ray  
A gentler being than he is by day :  
He to the loved one’s cottage home is bound,  
His long black shadow striding o’er the ground ;  
And see ! the green-bound cottage meets his view,  
And looketh lovelier for the moonlight too !  
And now the taper’s twinkle hath expired  
To notify the wrinkled dame retired.  
But lovely is the eye a vigil keeping  
For him when every loveless thing is sleeping,  
And lovely is the girl whose breath grows mute  
In eager listening for the expected foot !”

## IX.

“ O, happy girl !” said Ada innocently :—  
Consumption breathes no soul away more faintly  
Than these few words were spoken ; but they came  
To Allan’s ear like breath to hidden flame.  
His lady-love, though trembling when he knelt,  
Heard out his tale, and more than heard it—felt !  
It would have done a good heart good, to see  
Propriety and passion thus agree.

## X.

But what is this that glitters on his breast?  
A golden cross!—She guesseth all the rest—  
And clasps her hands and prays, for she hath  
cause!—

Oh, what a flash of timely truth it was!—  
A flash of timely truth, although it blighted  
The hopes of both that reached to be united;  
For now the fact is out, that Allan wears  
The creed which gave her sire so many cares  
That their amount was madness. There he sat,  
Hushed into slumber by their quiet chat—  
The old, and reverend, and crazed, and blind;—  
Why rushed his ravings now across her mind?—  
And here a suitor knelt—young, loving, dear:—  
Alas! there was another madness here!  
But “the bruised reed” was dearer for the bruise,  
And, though ’twas hard his daughter had to choose  
Between his sorrow and her own, the choice  
She made was virtue’s—and she thought not twice.

## XI.

“Nay, Allan, rise; I cannot give my hand—  
In truth, it is not at my own command:  
My father has a claim, and it must be  
The only claim that man shall have on me.  
We have been friends—none truer—but to press  
This suit will make me love—esteem thee less.”  
What farther passed my story needs not show;  
Nor, gentle reader, boots it thee to know.—

Enough, that Allan felt a thunder-shock,  
In every word the high-souled maiden spoke,  
That all the gaiety forsook his air—  
That soon his step fell heavy on the stair.

## XII.

But she—the free-will-offerer—what felt she?  
Was her step lighter, or her look more free?  
Hers had been no unmeaning sacrifice,  
Though he for whom 'twas offered could not prize  
Its piety. Her heart was true, but sore—  
A smoking altar, whose sad rites were o'er.  
But soon she came more calmly to herself,  
And felt her peace had passed a fearful gulf!—  
And how?—Oh, woman hath an eye when man  
Hath none, and seeth deeper than he can!  
Her reason there's a potency to charm,  
But none to lull her instinct-dread of harm.

### PART THIRD.



#### I.

How grateful was the breeze that kissed his brow,  
Though scarcely rocking the laburnum's bough !  
Behind the hedge it sang its sleepy psalm,  
And made the calm, still night appear more still  
and calm.

He strode along the garden-walks of Durn,  
And tried to leave,—but took another turn,—  
Lingering unwittingly, until his heart  
Regathered all its strength and would not part !  
He enter'd the summer-house ;—it might  
Be unawares ; or else to shun the light, }  
Which, at that season, never leaves us quite. }  
Entering he stumbled on a chair, and knew  
That bow'ër could not but have chairs for two.  
Then, stretching forth his hand, it touched a flute—  
His own—and henceforth to be dry and mute !

And next, a handkerchief which she had left—  
And thus was tempted to commit a theft;—  
And now threw down a book, where they had read—  
That morning, (of a day so sadly fled,)  
How a young, gallant knight went to the wars,  
To win him, as he gaily said, some scars;  
(And here a gentle heart could understand  
These scars were meant to win a lady's hand;)  
And how his countrymen were forced to yield,  
And leave him with the bleeding on the field—  
His sword all hacked and bloody, and his flesh  
All hacked and bloody too; and how a fresh  
And timely breeze, direct from heaven blew  
The blood-reek off, and afterwards the dew  
Wept out its coolness, and his quiet eye  
Opened again, and, gazing on the sky  
So beautiful, he felt it hard to die! }  
And how the foemen came and found him living  
Next morn, and saved him—for, with no misgiving,  
He took the cordial nutriments they gave,  
And soon was strong enough to be—a slave.  
And now, for seven long years, the scars he got  
Were from ignoble thongs; yet he winced not,  
But prayed and longed, as month on month crawled  
past,  
For one true sword again; which at the last  
He did receive, and thus, one bloody night,  
Betook himself to honourable flight.  
The story then rehearsed his doughty deeds  
Before he reached his home in Palmer-weeds,

Where a fair lady, hearing of his death,  
Had almost veiled her beauty for her faith.  
But when he flung aside the shadowy hood,  
(Himself it was that bore report so rude,)  
She knew him—for his scars, though not a few }  
Let still some glimpses of his old face through— }  
And paid him with a kiss, which more than paid }  
him too !

## II.

The tale shot through his bosom like a pain,  
And now he felt in love and hope again ;  
And growing calmly earnest with the theme,  
Sat down and mused himself into a dream,  
Such as the notes of drowsy music make,  
When you half fear you sleep, and fear as much to  
wake.

Yet ever and anon he gives a start  
And heareth—what ? the beating of his heart ?  
Not so, for now his heart is beating calmer—  
He only hears the foot-step of the Palmer :  
And now he quickens from the trance Elysian,  
And feels the Palmer too was but a vision.  
Yet there is a pulsation in the air,  
A footstep, or a groaning, or a prayer—  
He slideth silently along the wall,  
Reaches the free air and discovers all ;  
For, as I said, though darkness did prevail,  
Light had not left the world, but gone behind a veil.



## 111.

'Twas Ada, who had ventured abroad  
To open all her sores before her God.  
She knelt—a rose among the roses—and  
Upraised to heaven the lily of her hand,  
Her hot lip quivering, and her limbs all shaking,  
As if she feared there might be ill in breaking  
The silence of an hour, so deep and still,  
With e'er a misery-ronghened syllable.  
At first her words were calm and unconfined,  
For Ada loved and prayed for all mankind ;  
But when they centred on her poor old sire,  
They came like sparks struck from a heart on fire.  
She spoke of her own murmuring with regret,  
But oh ! the ernshing hand lay heavy yet ;  
The tender lamb was shorn, but, as she said,  
The storms that beat upon it were not laid :—  
“ Great Shepherd, save it from the biting cold,  
Until it meetens for thy better fold !”  
A sapling full of tender leaves was she,  
And might adorn, but could not prop the tree—  
That aged tree had need of more support  
Than earth could give, and of a better sort.  
And now she supplicated purer light  
For those that sit beneath the popish night,  
The very terror of whose doctrines had  
(As she expressed it,) driven her father mad.  
“ Yet, Heavenly Father, erring though they be,  
They look through clouds, but oh, they look for  
thee !”

And here the rich voice faltered, for she found  
 Her thoughts had fixed on questionable ground,  
 To deprecate a creed which had undone  
 Her peace, and wrought themselves into a benison.

## IV.

*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*

## V.

Meanwhile the breeze had sighed itself to death,  
 The trees were dumb for very lack of breath,  
 The poplar's lightest leaf had ceased to quiver,  
 And all things panted with a heat like fever  
 About to burst in madness. At the first,  
 A growling voice was heard, and then a burst  
 Of distant savage laughter, as it seemed ;  
 And then all ears, whether they woke or dreamed,  
 Might hear the bellowing thunder plough the sky,  
 A tramp like heaven's war-steeds prancing by,  
 And mountains echoing like a battle's rout,  
 While all the lightnings hung their banners out—  
 Those fiery sheets that flap o'er heaven, and fling  
 Their revel forth, like torch-lit rioting.

## VI.

'Tis break of day, although a cloud is drawn  
 Over the pale, thin, watch-worn face of dawn,—  
 A grim black cloud, though the red flashes wreathe it  
 In grandeur, and a corse grows black beneath it.

## VII.

Next morn the sun ne'er saw a fairer heaven,—  
 Which smiled too freshly to be unforgiven :  
 There was a light-heart briskness in the air—  
 For cheerfulness is Nature's morning-prayer—  
 And, save a heavier moaning from the brooks,  
 Whose waters pale had lost their summer-looks,  
 Nothing recalled the midnight's broken sleep—  
 That its accompaniments had been more deep  
 In meaning than a common Spring-day's freaks,  
 Or tears that dance down April's laughing cheeks,—  
 Till, in the shade of some grave trees which bound  
 Durn-land, a thunder-stricken corse was found  
 By a poor, lame, rheumatic, gray-hair'd man,  
 Who at the sight flung by his crutch and ran  
 Until he came to Islaford, and then  
 Shriek'd out his story to the serving-men,  
 And never spoke a word of sense again !  
 For he had recognized the garments on  
 The black, heart-turning form, and knew it was his  
 son !

## VIII.

The rustics meet to bear the corse away,  
 And moralize above the lifeless clay.  
 But whither must the dreary load be borne ?  
 As Durn is nearest, they resolve—to Durn.  
 Their garments form at once a pall and bier—  
 All sorrow's artful aid was wanting here ;

But Islaford meanwhile had heard the tale,  
And, lest their willing, but rude wits should fail  
To show the delicacy due to pain,  
He spurred his steed and overtook the train,  
And thanked them for their care, and said he would  
Repay it soon, and praised their promptitude ;  
Dismissing one to seek the poor man's friends,  
Another for the readiest hearse he sends,  
And rides himself before the bier to Durn.

The gentle lady greeteth his return,  
Perchance, with some surprise, but no offence,  
For well she knew his worth and innocence.  
But, when he told the occasion of his call,  
And led, or rather bore her from the hall,  
That no hard sight or rash unthinking tongue  
Might with rude utterance do her spirit wrong :  
Her kind heart opened and she could have told—  
For gentle deeds makes gentle natures bold—  
How she would wear, beyond time's power to efface,  
The memory of that most dear embrace.

## IX.

But the low converse of the loving two,  
Meanwhile, had turned a corner wholly new :  
Of death they spoke, and of the christian's faith  
Which readeth a beatitude in death ;  
Of those debated creeds which save us not ;  
Of heaven, where controversy is forgot—  
A tempest that hath ruffled the deep sea  
Of, what were else, a blest humanity.

And both, though marvelling at themselves, agreed  
That right and wrong were found in every creed ;  
That faith was one of the heart's businesses ;—  
And here the squire said something about his ;  
And, knowing its effect on Ada's peace,  
Assayed to overturn what he called prejudice.

## X.

“ The church, which, till some centuries had run,  
Was undivided, like its God, and one ;  
The Heaven-accepted spouse whose earthly dower  
Was architecture, painting, music, power :  
The faith whose fervent votaries did not mock  
The altar with the weaklings of a flock ;  
That faith hath been the object of your fear,  
But see how gentle Catholicism is here !  
Our priests are doomed to celibacy—true :  
Are laymen hence unfit for husbands too ?  
We cherish, true, the memories of the dead,  
And hope our own will thus be cherished ;  
But still, for all this reverence, we give  
Their due devotion to the saints that live.  
And if we venerate the sacred sign,  
Or deem the mother of our Lord divine ;  
Must we for this one genial thought suppress,  
Or love the mothers of our children less ?  
Far from us, Ada, such suspicions be :  
This heart shall sooner break, than break its love  
to thee !”

## XI.

With prepossessed attention Ada heard,  
And thought she found a truth in every word ;  
Her breathing stopt, her colour came and went,  
“ Then go,” she said, “ and get my sire’s consent ;”  
Trembling the while lest some new thought should  
    lead  
The good old man to question Allan’s creed.  
The fear was vain, for the old man was won,  
When Allan begged his blessing as a son.

## PART FOURTH.

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O HOLY Wedlock ! is not thine the school  
Where Passion's self submits itself to rule ?  
In dreams of thee, I see a Magnus stand  
At the altar, with a burning-glass in hand,  
Concentrating the rays of love that float  
Around the lovely, to one sunny spot ;  
And there the turtle builds her warmest nest,  
And all things formed for bliss are there most blest !  
In thee, the weakest maiden finds her strength ;  
To thee, the gayest looks for peace at length.

### I.

The sacred months their gentle course had run,  
And Islaford was kneeling o'er a son ;  
And now the happy pair had tenfold joy,  
In seeing each the other in their boy.

But, 'twas a sunburst leading on a cloud—  
That evening saw the infant in his shroud ;  
The day that gave, recalled his quiet breath ;  
One pang had almost served for life and death—  
Mysterions twain ! and grievous when they meet,  
To make the swaddling-robe a winding-sheet !

## II.

The heart's hysteric beat, the gushing eye  
That only looked for comfort from on high,  
Might well have been expected ; but the change  
It made on the old clergyman was strange ;  
For, in that moment of unmingled pain,  
His mental vision was restored again :  
Disjointed Reason rendered, by a jerk,  
Fit to walk over Sorrow's blighting work—  
The mind diseased, by one sharp stroke made whole,  
And qualified to comfort or condole.

## III.

Painful associations dwelt at Durn—  
The cradle-coffin, and unbaptized urn ;  
And so the family moved, with one accord.  
To seek the novelties of Islaford.  
A favourite spot with Ada it had been :  
To Allan 'twas at least a change of scene ;  
To old John Rose, 'twas something wholly new—  
And thus Resolve "had never less to do."



## IV.

Grief liveth long when resolutely dumb,  
 And Time that eateth all things feedeth some.  
 Have ye not seen a mother's pride of heart,  
 In showing a flock where death has had no part?  
 Naming them, large and small, her "little ones."  
 She links them, like a chain of precious stones,  
 In the order of their years; one, from the breast  
 New weaned, who seems the child of all the rest,  
 Stands crowing at a side; her eldest brother—  
 The guard, the guide, the playmate—at the other.  
 Have ye not marked the gradual stature's rise  
 From head to head, years only making size;  
 While the eye, from infancy, where it began,  
 Has clomb, by steps, o'er childhood—youth—and  
 man,

But found no death-break in the household stair,  
 For all whom God has given still are there?  
 This is a scene too exquisitely dear  
 To show us oft, if Heaven would be severe;  
 Which, ne'ertheless, all mothers hope to see—  
 The fullest meaning of, *a family*.  
 Oh! the first death that breaks this hope and pride,  
 Come when it will, might throw a heart beside  
 Itself! but thou, grim King, to do the worst  
 That Death can do—strike, strike the very first!

## V.

Thus the good lady, whose sweet name of Rose  
 Once more shall scent my tale before its close—

Had many a dream of baby-lips that lay  
Upon her breast, and sucked her life away ;  
Of tiny hands that twined among her curls,  
And well supplied the want of other pearls ;  
And of a face, so spiritual in hue,  
It seemed an infant's, yet an angel's too—  
Which, ever as she gazed, would wane, and wane,  
As if about to seek the sky again—  
Some little soul whose chain of flesh had broke,  
Whom to detain she straggled and awoke—  
Or, haply, half awoke, and felt around  
The pillows all, but never, never found  
A lip those milk and honey streams to taste,  
Which bless that land of promise—a young mother's breast.

## VI.

But gentle, breezy jauntings are not ta'en  
On forest-skirt and water-brink in vain ;  
And health at once with parent-hopes restored,  
Brought joy, though calmer, back to Islaford.  
Yet, ah ! a canker in the bud still lurks,  
The household secret like a demon works ;  
That demon had possession of the fact,  
That truth had once been overstept by tact.

## VII.

Old John, the while, was wearing fast away,  
And waiting calmly for his dying day ;  
His garden-visits had for long been rare,  
Though Old Age loves a draught of merry air.

And now 'twas found he could be only led  
From bed to board and back again to bed.  
Yet, sensitive in blindness, he had felt  
A shadow, like the consciousness of guilt,  
Which sometimes wrapt the household in its gloom ;  
And once the servant whispered of a room  
Which seemed to have something mysterious in it,  
For as he listened all was hushed that minute.

## VIII.

A few days after this had happened, John  
Was left—as he conjectured—lord alone,  
With a young girl to lead him when he walked,  
Read what he wished, and listen when he talked :  
“ This very day”—he rubbed his hands for glee—  
“ Shall satisfy my curiosity ;  
Most opportunely have my keepers gone,  
I'll have the whole house rummaged—Girl, lead on !”  
Door after door was opened till, alas !  
They came to one the menial tried to pass ;  
Which, strangely, he observed, and clamorously  
Commanded her to unlock or give the key :  
The trembling creature answered, there was none—  
It was the chapel, and the priest was gone.  
“ The priest !” he echoed, and with maniac strength  
Assayed to break the door, which broke at length.

## IX.

One window, well obscured, admitted all  
The light that travelled o'er the pictured wall,

Save what appeared to come from the sweet face  
Of saint or visioned angel : All the place  
Was darkened as a sick-room is, for there  
The sin-sick heart reposed in hope and prayer.  
The walls were storied with the life and death  
Of Mary's son—the Man of Nazareth ;  
And on the ceiling, the enchanted eye  
Saw, through a rift of clouds, the purple sky—  
Where, as if waiting souls set free from thrall,  
A shadowy spirit sat. But, crash and fall,  
The door burst open and the canvass shook  
With the fresh gush of air, and in a nook  
Which, from the o'ercharge of light elsewhere,  
looked dimmer,  
Its pictured saints and scenes began to glimmer,  
And every holy shape appeared to move,  
Shuddering at what they could not here reprove ;  
For he that did the sacrilege saw naught  
Of all the piety wherewith the place was fraught.

## X.

On, on, with vengeful hurried step he strode—  
And what doth vengeance in the house of God ?  
The altar from its holy place he tore,  
And dashed the sacred vessels on the floor.  
But what he said no narrative shall say ;  
For she that heard, until her dying day  
Will not forget the curse, the laugh, the yell—  
Each, frightful as the mother-tongue of hell—  
With which he named his daughter and the creed

Whose toys he trampled. But the impious deed—  
If it was impious—was to be atoned  
For, soon. Had he in truth believed the bond  
Of filial love was broken, well he might  
Have prayed the bands of life to disunite.  
And so they did, right speedily: a fit  
Convulsing soul and body could admit  
No doubtful termination. There he fell,  
And few, few words may serve the rest to tell:—  
He gnashed his teeth, his white eyes gave a roll,  
And this was the departure of a soul!



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.





TO MY FATHER,  
WHO DIED IN JAMAICA.

---

I.

My father, when I saw thee first the hum  
Of men was round me—'twas a sabbath-day—  
And when thine arm caressed me I was dumb,  
And when thou spak'st I knew not what to say;  
For it had not been granted me to play  
With a dear father's smile, or on thy knee  
To sit and talk thine anxious brow away,  
And feel the joy of giving joy to thee!  
This would have given me joy, but was not given  
to me.

II.

As, when the friend we love is on his way,  
'Tis sweet to gaze or think we gaze on him,  
However indistinct his form and gray,  
Or even evanishing in the distance dim;

As, when a pilgrim hears the evening hymn,  
Though chanted in a tongue he never knew,  
Shapes from his home across his vision swim,  
And, doffing his rude cap, he kneeleth too !  
Something like this I felt when first I gazed on you !

## III.

Thy little boy was sent to school one day,  
And read not in thy face, so grief-begone,  
The pang of parting—till thou wert away,  
When all was plain and I was very lone !  
They told me truly ; but I wandered on,  
And wondered why we met not as before !—  
There seemed a meaning in the ocean's moan,  
And, as I roamed along the beaten shore,  
I called, but called in vain, and never saw thee more.

## IV.

The sun shines shadowless upon thy grave,  
And Afric mourners pass bare-headed by :  
Upon it may the undying verdure wave,  
And every wind be laden with a sigh !  
I've often had a childish wish to lie,  
If but an hour, upon that sod so dear—  
To sleep and dream thy spirit hovered nigh,  
And thou, if angels weep, wouldst drop a tear—  
Unless thy soul forgets the souls that loved thee  
here !

## V.

Father in heaven ! I have not lost thee yet,  
Although no more I bend the filial knee ;  
Thy golden image in my heart is set,  
And there I study to resemble thee,  
And, for a spell to make the foul world flee,  
Pronounce thy name—a name for ever dear :  
As light unsullied 'twas bequeathed to me,  
And—aid me, Thou that aidest the sincere—  
Unsullied it shall be when I am on my bier !

## SONNET.

## THE WIFE.



Oh, 'tis not in unmeaning thoughtless phrase  
The Wife is termed her husband's better part,  
For fully as much truth as gentle heart  
Might thus be spoken:—In her maiden days  
With ear averted, even from voice of praise,  
And conduct wisely framed by tact and art,  
She shunned the world—too often beauty's mart :  
But Hymen changeth her most wayward ways :

Her husband now ne'er ceaseth she to woo,  
For where his courtship ends, doth her's begin ;  
The every path she loves is made for two ;  
And when he falls, there's not a seraphin  
In all God's heaven that could so kindly view,  
Or love so tearfully the man of sin.

## SONNET.

## TO A LADY, ON HER REFUSING TO SING.



NAY, Lady, do not say thine art is spent,  
Thine is not *art* to spend ; that melody  
Was less thy creature than a part of thee ;  
Thy voice so wedded to the instrument,  
Soul of its soul, and each so finely blent  
Into the other,—heartless would it be  
To sunder the sweet help-mates that agree  
With such a hearty and unstrained consent.

O Lady, bring us back that wandering air  
That went away bewailing, for it seems  
An old familiar spirit—as it were  
The Bethlehem-song that hushed our cradle-  
dreams,  
When shepherd-mothers their lone watch were  
keeping  
Over their small dear flocks, all helpless sleeping.

## SONNET.

## THE WIND AND THE LEAF.



O LISTEN, ladies, and I'll tell you brief  
A touching tale but true as history :—  
The Wind and Leaf held dalliance : "Gentle Leaf,"  
The wooer said, "awake and fly with me.  
For thee I've left the beds where roses are,  
And though their opening bosoms woo'd my stay,  
Though every jewel-bud shone like a star,  
I thought upon my Leaf and came away.  
Thy sisters dark are sleeping in the dew,  
I would not wake their coldness with a sigh ;  
But thou—the beautiful, and I—the true  
Were made for mutual passion, let us fly."

The Leaf complied and, ere a day was gone,  
Was flung away—a thing to trample on !

## SONNET.

## TO THE EARTH.



EARTH, I have grown less earthly gazing on thee,  
And nurtured feelings foreign to the throng  
Of reptile-men that walk in slime upon thee,  
And do thy gentlest nature frequent wrong ;  
For I have gazed upon thee with a pride,  
As on a near relation—thou art such ;  
And I have wept for those, too leaden-eyed  
To weep, that mar a loveliness so rich.  
And I have gazed upon thee with a wish,  
While my weak eye reposed upon the sod—  
That, when I felt life's sinking fountains gush  
Less freely, and my very heart a load—  
I thus might throw its weight on thee and rest ;  
Or die, to learn what peace is in thy breast !

## THE DYING HUSBAND.



O GENTLY, gently raise me up,  
On this sad bed, my spouse,  
To look ance mair upon the wood  
Whaur first we changèd vows.  
The spring is coming, Jeanie,  
For the trees begin to sprout;  
But, ere the leaf is fully blawn,  
A secret will be out!  
My heart is beatin' loud and fast,  
And ilka beat's a pang;  
The deid-bell soundin' in my lug,  
Has tauld me I maun gang;  
And death has come to our bed-side—  
But, oh! its hard to dee,  
And pairt wi' a' I've loved sae weel—  
Yet dinna greet for me!

Last night I had a waesome dream—  
What gars me tell it noo?  
Methought I saw a stranger-youth  
A-courtin,' courtin' you;



But the willow-tree hang ower ye,  
For I watched its branches wave,  
And the wither't bink ye sat on, was  
A newly-covered grave !  
The heavy moon was rising  
On the simmer day's decline ;  
And deid men's banes a' glimmer't white,  
Beneath the pale moonshine !  
Oh ! 'twas a sad, ungenerous dream,  
As ever dream could be,  
For lang hae ye been leal and kind—  
Sae dinna greet for me !

O, Jeanie, dinna look sae wae,  
Upon your bairnies three ;  
Poor, sabbin' things, they'll break my heart  
Or I hae leave to dee !  
My little lambs, wi' Heaven's help,  
This warld ye'll warstle through—  
Ye greet for me ! O, never let  
Your mither greet for you.  
And, Jeanie dear, our wee, wee bairn  
When toddlin like the lave,  
Ye'll tak' her down to yon kirkyard,  
And show her father's grave.  
There, tell her of the deathless One,  
That fends for her and thee ;  
And there she'll learn to lisp a prayer,  
And dry your tears for me !

## LINES WRITTEN IN MY BIBLE.



THERE is a star that lights the gloom  
Of human life, and fadeth never ;  
Whose brightness can alone illumine  
The wave of death's unlovely river.

There is a word, the word of life,  
That ne'er deceived the humblest sinner ;  
A hand that aids the pilgrim's strife,  
And makes the weakest arm a winner.

That hand ! it smites as well as guides—  
O, may I ne'er despise its beckon ;  
That voice, which now so gently chides,  
Shall one day bid the dead awaken !

Blest Book ! when rightly understood,  
How high the truths that thou relatest  
Of them—the great, the wise, the good ;  
And Him—the Wisest, Best, and Greatest !

## IT WAS A DREAM.



It was a dream—'twas naething mair,  
But weary fa' the morrow  
That cam' wi' sic a loveless gläre,  
And wakened me to sorrow.  
The orange-bloom was in her hair,  
And never twain were fonder ;  
It was a dream—'twas naething mair,  
And we were forced to sunder.

It was a dream—'twas naething mair,  
But oh, wert thou my dearie,  
I hae a love that canna wear,  
A heart that winna wearie !  
I'll bind in wreaths thy yellow hair,  
Like links o' gowd I'll braid it ;  
It was a dream—'twas naething mair,  
And nae but thee can read it.

While others seek the festive glee,  
My lanely thoughts thou sharest ;  
It's sweeter far to muse on thee,  
Than mingle wi' the rarest.  
The hope that haunts but canna heal,  
Must evermair pursne me,  
Unless—unless ye do reveal,  
Sweet lassie, gin ye'll loe me !

---

## ANNOT RAE.

## I.

WE parted by the ocean-brim,  
We parted very sad,  
And baith were dearer for the pang  
That hour of parting had ;  
Yet now that we are met again,  
Thy e'e is turned away,  
As if ye couldna be my ain—  
My lang-loved Annot Rae.

## II.

I likened thee to ilka thing  
That's gentle, sweet, and true :—  
A budding flower, a singing bird,  
The silent-dropping dew !

For, when we parted by the sea,  
The summer-wind at play  
Was no sae light and pure a thing  
As thou, my Annot Rae.

## III.

A fearfu' thought was whispered me,  
To set my soul on flame,  
That whaur I left the blush of love,  
I've found the blush of shame !  
Oh, I wad gie a world's wealth,  
To drive that thought away,  
And think that thou might yet be mine—  
My spotless Annot Rae !

## IV.

But lift thy head, my Annot Rae,  
And dicht thy red, red e'e ;  
I hate the wrecker o' thy peace  
Ower deep for hating thee.  
On thee I'll think wi' tenderness ;  
For lightly step should they  
That tread upon a broken heart,  
My hapless Annot Rae !

## ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF A SOUTER.



O THOU whase drouth is ill to sloken,  
Lament wi' tears wad wash a stockin' :  
For Death has had a drearie yokin'  
                    And driven's cou'ter  
Ower ane that now sleeps wantin' rockin'—  
                    Our canty souter.

Last ouk he took an unco dwam,  
And got his usual drug—a dram,  
Anither and anither cam',—  
                    He swallow't a' ;  
And lies as peacefu' as a lamb  
                    I' the lion's paw.

O Buchan,\* thou'rt without a marrow,  
Thy beuk has often eased our sorrow,  
And broken a tram o' death's wheel-barrow  
                    But what's the matter ?  
Thy saws he wasna muckle waur o'—  
                    And nae the better.

\* Author of the Domestic Medicine.

Whaur were ye a', ye men o' trade,  
 That day he was sae lowly laid,  
 When, lifting up his wearie head,  
           He loot an aith—  
 Some say he bann'd, some say he pray'd—  
           And sank in death?

Ye souters, grip your knees thegither,  
 And hing your heads aboon your leather,  
 The head that lies as laigh's the heather  
           May claim a tear;  
 The best o' you has lost a brither,  
           The warst—a fiere!

His ancestors straught up to Adam  
 Brawly he kent, and what they ca'd them;  
 Within his bible-brods he had them,  
           Their names and ages,  
 And whiles on Sundays proudly shawed them  
           On its fly pages.

He left it aye to learned ears  
 To list the music of the spheres,—  
 The sonnets of our auld forbears  
           He left to nane,  
 But could hae drawn the vera tears  
           Frae hearts o' stane.

But Crispin's art he chiefly tried,  
 And lang and sair the lapstane plied,  
 And mony a hole in mony a hide

Has Johnny made—  
'Twas aye his glory and his pride,  
Forbye his trade.

Wi' him nae brute's skin lay and rottit;—  
Now his ain carcass he has quit it,  
His weel-hained hide the yird has got it—  
A bitter change!—  
And clocks and worms are borin' at it,  
In pure revenge.

Nae bastard-son auld Scotland mourns,  
But tells to a' whom it concerns  
He was, amang her true-born bairns,  
A dainty loon,  
Whase saul is jinkin' through the starns  
Ayont the moon.

And is there ane wha wadna tire  
O' nature's glee and nature's fire,  
Wad weep when genius' rays expire  
Within a gutter?—  
Ye wad hae wandered miles o' mire  
To have seen the souter.

And can ye gie us music's charms?  
Then blaw your reeds and thrum your thairms,  
And do your best to sound alarms  
Frae pipe and fiddle;  
For Death's could clammy sheep-shank arms  
Clasp Johnny Riddle.



In yon kirk-yard we saw him laid,  
And near-hand cursed the sexton's spade ;  
The clods fell duntin' ower his head,  
                    Wi' dowie sound,  
And auld fowk grat and bairnies play'd  
                    Around and round.

O Life, thou wears sae sad a mein,  
Thou'rt hardly worth a heidless preen ;  
And when this warld is brunt up clean,  
                    Like an auld bucket,  
Deil blaw the ase o't in their een  
                    Wha fin' the lack o't.

O Death, since he has had to pree you—  
Though very few are blithe to see you—  
Come on, three honest cheers I'll gie you,  
                    Ye ill-faur't widdie ;  
But dinna bring the auld chiel wi' you,  
                    To fley a body !

## SONG.

## SMILE AGAIN.



## I.

SMILE again, bonny lassie,  
Lassie, smile again;  
Your loving look of auld langsyne,  
O look that love again!  
There's no a frown in a' the warld,  
But thine, could gie me pain;  
Then smile again, bonny lassie,  
Lassie, smile again.

## II.

But tell me not—O dinna tell  
Of joy, while I can see  
The cheeks where dimples ever dwell,  
Hae smiles for a' but me;  
There's no a glint in a' your face  
But gleams for me in vain;  
Then smile again, bonny lassie,  
Lassie smile again.

## III.

The star o' eve that brings the dew,  
And brightens a' but me,  
When gleamin' frae the starry blue,  
Is like my Peggy's e'e ;  
Twas first at it the torch was lit  
Of love that burns sae fain ;  
Then smile again, bonny lassie,  
Lassie, smile again.

## IV.

The spring may come without a flower,  
To glad the humming bee ;  
And summer glow without a shower,  
To cool the parching lea.  
Whate'er's my lot, I'll murmur not,  
If thou wilt be my ain ;  
Then smile again, bonny lassie,  
Lassie, smile again.

## DONALD MACBEAN.



## I.

How gently the breath of the evening is blawin'—  
I gie it a sigh as it sinks in the glen,  
And mingle my tear wi' the dew drap that's fa'in'—  
It fa's on the grave of poor Donald Macbean!  
The stranger beholds me, and spiers why I'm weepin'  
Sae silent and sad, for I never complain;  
But mine is a grief as unchangin', as deep, an'  
As calm as the sleep of poor Donald Macbean!

## II.

I mind on the day when nae wind could hae wafted  
A sigh frae my bosom or gi'en me a pain,  
On ilka wild flower I then had engrafted  
Some tender idea of Donald Macbean;  
As the wee flow'ries wither't my heart wither't wi'  
them,  
But spring soon restored them to beauty again;  
They're blooming sae sweetly, wi' sorrow I see  
them—  
They bloom on the grave of poor Donald Macbean

## III.

O, warm was his bosom, and dearly he lo'ed me,  
Though nae wi' the love o' a saft-sighing swain ;  
He hang his claymore on his side while he woo'd me ;  
And fell wi' the foremost—poor Donald Macbean !  
He fought for his country, its claims, and its sorrows,  
He fought for his prince on Culloden's dark plain ;  
Though his name is na mentioned wi' those o' our  
heroes,  
There ne'er was a braver than Donald Macbean !

## IV.

When the ghosts of Culloden—the warrior and  
chieftain—  
Look forth on the field of disaster again,  
Half-hidden and dark, as the shadows are shiftin',  
I see the dim form of poor Donald Macbean :  
While voices of woe in the tempest are shrieking,  
He comes to the hallan that ance was his ain ;  
The wind whistles drear, and a voice from it  
speaking  
Says, Soon shall ye sleep with poor Donald  
Macbean.

## SONG.

AIR—" *Mary Jamieson.*"

## I.

O WEEL, weel may the lip unblest  
Be wither'd, dry, and wan—  
That sings, unpraised—and sees, unkiss'd,  
The lip o' Lady Ann!  
But were she queen of a' Scotland,  
Less hope I couldna share;  
And were she queen of a' Scotland,  
I couldna love her mair!

## II.

Ye needna tell me this is wrang,  
I've tauld mysel' the same;  
But gi'en my heart its will ower lang,  
And now it winna tame.  
Yet ae kind look, O wad she cast,  
Afore I'm taen awa'!  
I ken my hope maun fa' at last,  
But this wad break its fa'!

## SONG.

AIR—" *Andro and his Cutty Gun.*"



HERE 's to ancient Caledonia,  
(Drink it round afore we gae,)  
Love to ilka lass that 's bonny,  
Lads to ilka ane that 's nae.

Scotsmen, keep the cogie jumblin',  
Base be he whaur first it dries,  
Time aneuch when stools are tumblin'—  
Wha, afore he fa's, wad rise?  
Here's to &c.

Is't for sic unwordy beings  
Ye're in haste to gang awa' ?  
Scawlin' wives, and squawlin' weans,  
We'll for ance forget them a'.  
Here's to &c.

Here is nane to try your patience  
Wi' his gude-words, said by rote ;  
Scotland, when she pours libations,  
Always pours them down her throat !  
Here's to &c.

Scotland ! dearer a'thegither  
Than the land that bears the vine ;—  
Land of heroes, hills, and heather,  
Drunk or dry, we're always thine !  
Here's to &c.

Life, and love, and wit forgathers,  
In the cogie we've them a',  
Gin ye let them dry their feathers,  
Here's my hand—they flee awa.'  
Here's to &c.

Wha can toom the grey-beard soonest ?  
Wha the cogie never hains ?  
Mark him, Love, his heart thou tunest,  
Life louns keenest in his veins !

Here's to ancient Caledonia,  
(Drink it round afore we gae,)  
Love to ilka lass that's bonny,  
Lads to ilka ane that's nae.



## SONG.

\* MY AIN BOARD-EN'.

## I.

I CANNA bide at e'en  
    Frae my ain board-en',  
There's a wifie and a wean  
    At my ain board-en';  
And a blithesome-beaming e'e  
Blinks across the hameward lea,  
And a dish is laid for me  
    On my ain board-en'.

## II.

But though I maun awa'  
    To my ain board-en',  
I'll be blithe to see ye a'  
    At my ain board-en'.  
Wit mayna aften flash,  
But gossips seldom gash,  
And scandals never clash  
    At my ain board-en'.

• Board-en', A Table.

## III.

I hae aye a jug of ale  
    On my ain board-en',  
And mony a canty tale  
    At my ain board-en';  
They are wearin' auld I trow,  
But they're better far than new,  
When tauld by lips I loo,  
    At my ain board-en'.

## IV.

I hae twa-three miles to gang  
    To my ain board-en',  
And in troth I'm thinkin' lang  
    For my ain board-en';  
And nane will surely blame,  
For, gin Bliss be worth a name,  
It is worth the carrying hame  
    To our ain board-en'.

## SUN AND WAVE ARE MEETING.

## A CRADLE-HYMN.

~~~~~

[The following verses were written several years ago, on seeing a young female (and her child) who had experienced the sad fallings-off of fortune, selling willow-baskets for her daily bread. The weave-the-willow sentimentalism of sad heroines in three-volumed novels, has no propinquity in sorrow to this.]

Sun and Wave are meeting,  
Daylight fast retreating,  
And the flocks are bleating  
    Hameward ower the lea ;

Sleep, my bonny dearie,  
Angel-dreams be near ye,  
Ne'er be thou sae wearie  
    That sleep itsel' shall flee !

Thine be nights of slumber,  
Days that ne'er shall number  
Half the woes that cumber  
    My heart so heavily !

When thy father parted  
Frae his Broken-hearted,  
Sad and hope-deserted  
Fell his look on thee.

Yet affection glowing,  
Gentler breezes blowing,  
Fortune's full-tide flowing  
Shall bring him back to me

Then, when the sad billow  
Has ceased to be his pillow,  
No more I'll weave the willow,  
Baby, for bread to thee.

No longer, hunger-tasket,  
I'll plait my osier-basket,  
Or by rude tongues be asket  
To bate my penny fee.

When the next moon kisses  
Autumn's gowden tresses,  
Such a night as this is  
Shall bring thy sire frae sea.

## ELOPEMENT SONG.

AIR—" *Auld Lang Syne.*"

## I.

THE lovely moon is shining o'er  
A silvery shining lake,  
Whose waves come laughing to the shore,  
And brighten as they break ;  
These waves shall bear us on, my dear,  
And o'er this lake we'll go ;  
Yon moon shall be our honey moon—  
Sweet lady, say not No !

## II.

I see thee wave thy lily hand,  
I see thy smile divine ;  
And, lady, well I understand  
What means the sacred sign.  
That smile can I forget, my dear,  
That hand can I forego ?  
Though all thy father's kin were here,  
My love, I'd answer No !

## BLEACHIN' HER CLAES.



ONE morning I dander'd (I needna say when)  
Whaur a wee bickerin' burnie rins through a low  
glen,

I met a young lassie amang the green braes ;—  
She was herdin' her lammies and bleachin' her claes.

The bloom on her cheek was the rose's bright hue,  
And clear her complexion as fresh-fa'in' dew,  
Her yellow hair streamed like the sun's parting  
rays,  
And her breath was as sweet as her new-watered  
claes.

I said, " Lovely maiden, how caller the air !  
The season how pleasant ! the morning how fair !  
The fields are a' flowers, and the flowers are a' dew,  
And if earth has aught fairer, sweet girl, it is you."

She cried, " Let me be, I maun notice my claes,  
And canna mind a' thing that ilka ane says ;  
My mither aye tauld me—and likely she'd ken—  
That there's fouth o' fine tales but nae faith in  
young men."

“O dinna look blate though your mither may scauld,  
Her heart-bluid is daiver’t, she’s doinit and auld;  
And say, bonnie lassie, what ills ye could dree  
Frae the laddie that loves ye, and loves nane but  
thee?”

I kissed her, I pressed her,—mair tender she grew,  
And sank in my arms, crying, “Laddie be true!”  
Though art wad hae frownèd, and pride made a  
fraise,  
The lassie had nane that was bleachin’ her claes.

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### EPITAPH.

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HERE lieth one who lived, (but lived not long,)  
As right as knew he had been often wrong;  
So proud—he would not e’en to bliss be driven;  
So poor—he carried all he had to heaven.

## SONNET.

## THE HARMONY OF NATURE.



THE timid Night had set her sentinels,  
O'er the blue fields of heaven a warm breeze blew  
From the poetic south, and all that dwells  
Of Peace on earth in one sweet hour I knew;  
For, gazing on the gracious Heaven, I grew  
So spiritual, and every sense so keen,  
That I could hear the pink of falling dew,  
And see gay creatures dancing in its sheen:  
Oh, such a dream might glorify a life!  
Methought I stood with Nature, soul to soul,  
And asked her if her bosom had its strife  
As well as ours: she gathered up her stole,  
And answered mild—"My attributes ye see,  
Love, Beauty, Music—can they disagree?"



## CONTENTMENT;

OR, BADENYON.



## I.

CONTENTMENT is a mine o' gowd  
And the discoverer's ain,  
Although a wee thing aff the road  
That leads direct to gain;  
And, frae an honest, canty sang,  
By canty, honest John,\*  
We've named the hamesome residence,  
The toun o' Badenyon.

## II.

Nae servants dance attendance to  
The music of a bell,  
But, tent me, nane are better served  
Than he that serves himsel';  
There's nought bides langer in your hand  
Than what your hand has won;  
Thus prudent guidance, more than gear,  
Is wealth in Badenyon.

\* Rev. John Skinner, Author of *Tullochgorum*, &c.

## III.

He's never poor that thinks nae sae,  
Nor rich that buys annoy ;  
And, mind, ae penny honest won  
Is tippence-worth o' joy.  
When Poverty has peace o' mind  
To rest its head upon,  
Oh, but it makes a wee bed warm  
And blesses Badenyon !

## IV.

I'm auld and gray, and bent and torn,  
But ne'er was heard repine,  
Or wish my friend a ragged coat  
For sake o' mendin' mine ;  
The laird rides by me wi' a splash,  
While I on foot trudge on—  
What reck ! he may ride far and lang,  
And meet nae Badenyon !

## V.

For caller beauty, come and see  
The cottar wifie's daughter,  
Wi' blushes warm as ruddy wine  
But pure as running water ;  
Though ance a-week, a while at night,  
She sits wi' consin John,  
Her e'e's the clearest, and her fame  
The best in Badenyon.

## VI.

Her sole cosmetic is the burn  
That wimples 'mang the broom,  
The orient fragrancie of morn  
Affords a rich perfume ;  
She never sees a brawer gown  
Than what hersel' has spun,  
But wonders that the laird has no  
His seat at Badenyon.

## VII.

This warld is hard aneuch to grip,  
As rich and poor hae kenn'd ;  
But there's a comfort in the thought—  
We'll see its hinder-end :  
To learn the way to heaven above  
Apply to good Mess John,  
But gin ye seek a heaven on earth—  
It lies in Badenyon.

THE  
COAL-BLACK STEED IS IN HIS STALL.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO MY HUSBAND.



[The title of this little poem will, of course, be received with a qualification. The right of a poet to address verses to his husband is to be understood as included in the original charter of his inspiration, by which he is empowered and entitled to sympathize and hold communion with every created thing; and, therefore, he may at times be the Wife as well as the Soldier, the Law-giver, or the Priest—or—what seems as unnatural as any of these—the Wealthy Man.]

THE coal-black steed is in his stall  
And neigheth to be free,  
But there's a tempest on the wind  
That must not beat on thee.

The thunder-cloud across the sky  
Comes like a bursting bomb,—  
Oh, how my heart will bless the storm  
That keepeth thee at home!

And lest ye long for sunny days  
And grudge the cloudy sky,  
I'll shew thee summer in my looks  
And sunshine in my eye:

I'll sing ye songs of wooing-time—  
For I have learned to woo—  
Or read your favourite books, for they  
Are now *my* favourites too !

The whole of heaven is one black frown,  
Ah, whither wouldst thou roam ?  
For well I wot ye never found  
A frowning face at home !

The coal-black steed is in his stall,  
And in his stall shall stay—  
'Twould be a sin to make me sad,  
So willing to be gay !

## THE TIME O' YEAR.\*

## SONG.

AIR—" *Jockey's far awa'.*"

## I.

WHEN Bogie-side puts on her pride,  
And Noth has decked his powe,  
The sweetest bud in glen or wud  
Is Jeanie o' the howe.  
In Winter's grief, in Summer's leaf,  
In Autumn's mellow cheer,  
She heeds no fraise because, she says,  
It's nae the time o' year.

## II.

In vain to her each worshipper  
Did all obeisance show,  
Within the shaw, ilk evening-fa',  
She breath'd her maiden-wo :  
"There is but ane my heart has ta'en  
And he's ower blate to spier,  
Or though he did, I wadna wed—  
For its nae the time o' year !

\* Time o' year—a phrase meaning, the appropriate season.

## III.

“It was a nicht when Love weel micht  
Have play’d his pranks unseen,  
When out gaed I to milk the kye  
As Rab cam’ ower the green:  
’Twas lang afore the wonted hour—  
He spak’ nae word o’ cheer;  
My heart was wae to see him gae,  
But—’twasna time o’ year.”

## IV.

The lad she loe’d ahint her stood  
And heard her mak’ her maen;  
He saftly went, she gae consent,  
And gaedna hame her lane!  
When the heart we woo and the lip we loe  
With ours are meeting near,  
Oh, Love will wile an yielding smile  
At ony time o’ year!

## JEANIE CAMPBELL.

AIR—" *Catherine Ogie.*"

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[The heroine of the following ballad (for ladies of modern times are all heroines—in print) was the daughter of a Canadian gentleman, who discharged the three-fold duties of farmer, militia-captain, and inn-keeper on the highway leading from Hamilton to London, Canada West. His tavern was one of the stages of a public coach, the driver of which—a young and meritorious Scotsman—took the opportunity of paying his addresses to the young lady, who—as far as fixing the wedding-day goes in America—may be said to have given him some encouragement. The wedding-day was fixed ; but a few weeks before it, a citizen of Michigan called at the inn, and, some eight days after his arrival, it was thought proper to inform the coachman that a change had taken place in his bride's affections, who was, nevertheless, still a bride ; and on the evening of the day on which he received this intelligence, the bridal party entered his coach and were driven to London, in order that the nuptial rites might be performed there. Over a stream called the Thames, a wooden bridge leads into the town, so dangerous that it requires considerable skill to drive a team of horses along it ; but to-night, all the coachman's endeavours could not induce the animals to take a lover's leap. I have given a pastoral character to the ballad ; but greater liberties are taken with more important truths, every day.]

## I.

WHEN summer-tide o'erflowed the shaw  
 With waves of flowery beauty,  
 When love was all the sight I saw,  
 And pleasure every duty ;  
 I heard a shepherd's sang o' wae  
 And half-forgot my ramble,  
 For aye the o'ercome o' his lay  
 Was, Faithless Jeanie Campbell.



## II.

O where, he cried, O where are gone  
Those words so sweetly spoken,  
That scarce I kent my heart had flown,  
Till a' its hopes were broken ?  
'Twas right thy fate to rend frae mine,  
But why, O why dissemble  
And leave thy lover here to pine,  
Fause-hearted Jeanie Campbell ?

## III.

The friend that's lang been true may shift,  
And a' that sought may shun me :  
The blackest cloud in a' the lift  
Hath pour'd its wrath upon me !  
The cloud that's o'er my weary soul,  
O what doth it resemble ?  
Frae me it's darkness canna roll,  
Fause-hearted Jeanie Campbell !

## IV.

How fondly, kindly we hae met !  
How sadly we hae parted !  
Alas ! canst thou remember yet,  
And not be broken-hearted ?  
Our little lambs their joys exprest  
In many a lightsome gambol,  
And leal and lightsome beat my breast,  
For there lay Jeanie Campbell !

## V.

O speak of me in ilka hour  
When hearts are beatin' sairly,  
And strew my grave wi' ilka flower  
The frost has nippit early,  
And mak' my grave beneath the pine,  
Surrounded by the bramble,  
And on its sod encarve this line—  
' FAUSE-HEARTED JEANIE CAMPBELL !'

## SONNET.

## TO THE INVENTRESS OF PAINTING.



'Twas a Corinthian girl, to whom was given  
The ministry of genius, like a shower  
In Spring's young fulness. Ah! the twilight hour  
To her came never half so full of Heaven,  
As when it brought her overwearied lover:  
Him she had lulled into a bless'd sleep,  
And now was leaning like an angel over  
The quiet face, and always drinking deep  
Out of its breathing fountain; but she tasted  
A joy sublimer, when, on the lit wall  
Catching the form of sleeping love, she hasted  
To trace the outline of its shadowy fall:  
The morning comes; her skill hath not been wasted;  
Her lover goes away, but goes not all!

## STANZAS.

ON VISITING LORD PITSLIGO'S CAVE NEAR  
ROSEHEARTY.

---

WHA diggit thee, thou queer auld biggin' ?  
My fegs, he's been some time o' diggin' !  
Thy red-stane wa's and vaulted riggin'  
    Ance formed a palace,  
Which white-rose loyalty lay snug in  
    And maugred malice.

The eagle has his rocky bole ;  
The founmart and the tod, a hole ;  
The thraw-mouse and the blinterin' mole  
    May howk the lea :  
But thou, auld cavern grim and droll,  
    Wha howkit thee ?

In thee the surly tempests sleep  
Before they rise and rouse the deep,  
When sailor-loves and mithers weep  
    Their sound to hear,  
And bairnies round the ingle creep  
    For very fear ;

Perhaps upon some fated morn,  
 In mad convulsion thou wert born;  
 Gray rocks by time till then unworn  
     Crash'd fearfully,  
 And Earth's auld womb was rent and torn  
     Producing thee.

But here conjecture a' is laid—  
 A ploughman, leaning ower his spade,  
 Declares 'twas no for tod, nor taed,  
     Nor erne, nor seagu';  
 But by the Lord's ain finger made  
     For Lord Pitsligo.

Ah, waes me for that aged man,  
 The lord of fair Pitsligo's lan',  
 Whase bald head lay beneath a ban  
     For following Charlie,  
 Because his prince required his han',  
     And got it fairly.

He sat within these wa's o' granite,  
 And ee'd the white rose on his bonnet,  
 And thought how Caledon's red planet  
     Had lost its glory,  
 Or haply croon'd some auld Scots sonnet  
     Of brighter story.

He thought upon the day of dool,  
 (For ne'er was April day so foul;

The very bairnies at the school  
    Wad greet to learn  
Its wrangs, deliberate and cool,  
    To wife and bairn.)

He rais'd his arm to yon blue vault,  
And spoke of blood-red fury dealt,  
And question'd why such heartless guilt  
    Should be forgiven,  
And ask'd if Justice always dwelt  
    Aloof in heaven !

---

### MARY LA MORE.

---

#### I.

AFAR from the scenes of my infancy roaming,  
The outcast of fortune, I came to the sea :  
The wild gulls were shrieking, the wild waves were  
    foaming,  
The landsmen were trembling—unnoticed by me !  
Proudly the seamen looked forth to the ocean,  
And wildly the landsmen looked back to the  
    shore,  
But I gazed on my love with a softer emotion,  
And felt not a fear but for Mary la More.

## II.

The spirits of death from their slumbers awakened,  
The demons of wrath brooded over the wave,  
The mermaid sang sweetly and mournfully beckoned  
The sea-beaten wanderers to rest and a grave!  
The landsmen clung fast to whatever was nearest,  
And I to my Mary more fond than before ;  
While each sought to save what their passions held  
dearest.  
I heaved not a prayer but for Mary la More.

## III.

Wild was the shock, like the gusts of December,  
That gave our proud ship to the rock and the  
wave ;  
But wilder—ah ! why do I live to remember ?—  
My visions of safety with nothing to save !  
I woke on the beach, but the tempest was over,  
The sea-boy sang time to the splash of his oar,  
But though nature smiled sweet as the smile of a  
lover,  
The green billow slumber'd o'er Mary la More !

## IV.

I called on her name in the burst of my anguish,—  
The hollow wind answered, the sea gave a groan ;  
And now in a bright busy world I must languish  
So lonely—O, never was any so lone !

I rove by the beach and sing peace to the billows,  
When wild is their rage and all mournful their  
    roar;  
For I hear a soft voice, like the wind among wil-  
    lows,  
That tells me of Mary, dear Mary la More !

---

### THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN.

---

I LEANED on my staff while I listened the strains  
That were sweet to me once, but the voices were  
    new ;  
I clomb the blue mountain, but knew not the swains  
Who were tending their flocks where the ptar-  
    migan flew.

My own native streamlet was blue as the sky,  
Its banks were as fair and its waters as clear,  
But it mirrored no longer the love-looking eye  
Whose magic makes all that it looks upon dear !

The shadows of twilight were darkening aloft  
When I flung myself down on the banks of the  
    stream,  
Its prattling so soothing, and murmur so soft,  
Gave song to my slumber and life to my dream ;



The mind loves to wander in regions unknown,  
Among creatures too lovely to be of our sphere ;  
And tired of this world maketh worlds of her own,  
More fair but as false as the one we have here.

I dreamed that I stood on that same lovely spot,  
Every mountain I knew and could call by its  
name.  
And naught save the difference of years was forgot,  
But all save the discords I left was the same !

Then I fancied that faces so fair could not change,  
And that bosoms so loved must be peopled with  
bliss,  
That the friends who had nursed me could never  
seem strange,  
But—never was vision so faithless as this !

## TO THE MOON.



STAR of our earth ! thou art brilliant again,  
The days of thy darkness are o'er,  
And the shepherds that watch in thy beam on the  
plain  
Will think thee as bright as before ;

But to me thou art loveless, all bright as thou art,  
And changed, sadly changed I must be  
Since first I felt love at its work in my heart,  
And learned to love gazing on thee !

Yet thou art the same and still smil'st as benign  
As the angel that scatters the dew ;  
Methinks, upon lovers thou only shouldst shine,  
And the love that thou light'st should be true !

In thee, Lady-planet, I never can trace  
An emblem of aught that could range ;  
For thine, lovely Orb, is the only fair face  
That smiles upon man without change.

## ELLINOR.



## PART FIRST.

## I.

WHIA's she that stands on yon fearsome steep,  
And gazes across the main,  
Wi' a look as lonely as if she lived  
In the wide, wide warld her lane ?  
Oh, Ellinor ance was as blithe and gay  
As a birdie's sang on a simmer-day,  
But her cheek is worn ower thin and howe  
To carry its auld-warl' dimple now !  
Her step is slow, for her heart is sair,  
And her e'e has a look of strange despair  
That wad try to hope, gin she didna fear  
Such hope would be high presumption here.

## II.

Squire Harvey sat in his stately ha',  
Observing the rustic maidens a',  
As on they hied to the village-fair ;  
And Ellinor's face was the fairest there—  
Ye could hae thought her sweet lips budding,  
Ye would hae known that health was flooding  
Her silken cheek by its rosy hue,  
And guessed that her mind was as healthy too.

## III.

The girls—no more than girls sedate,  
For why should a maid have a matron's gait?—  
Walked on ; but Ellinor paused to bless  
The sea she loved for its loveliness,  
Whose billows rose but did not break—  
Like the young heart spared for Mercy's sake ;  
When Love grows faithless, and Grief grows rough,  
It has only to heave and shake them off.  
She saw that the ocean-ways were safe,  
Else her thoughts, too, had begun to chafe—  
For she loved all things that quiet be,  
But none so well as the quiet sea.  
A thousand smiles came from the main,  
And she gave it a thousand smiles again,  
Then started off with a frightened air,  
As if any had seen her smiling there !

## IV.

Squire Harvey, frae his stately ha',  
 The low, but lovely maiden saw;  
 His heart was fause, and his thoughts were foul—  
 He spared nae right, he feared nae rule;  
 He recked no censure, and felt no shame—  
 His love was ruin, his hate—the same.

## V.

But Ellinor's love young William had,  
 And heart of her heart was the sailor-lad.  
 In childhood's path they two had met;  
 And, though now the wedding-day was set,  
 Neither seemed likely to discover  
 That childhood's happy time was over;  
 They knew that a rose might have its stings,  
     But nothing had led them to suppose  
 That there are such ungentle things  
     In life as thorns without a rose!  
 I see your Paradise, happy pair—  
 Alas! what a fiend is lurking there!

## VI.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*†

† In a late number of *Blackwood*, a powerfully-written critique denounces such starry stanzas as a pitiful subterfuge to which a writer betakes himself when there is something to grapple with beyond his mastery. With regard to the above, the reader is assured that, as far as the Author knows, there is nothing in it. He uses the device simply to notify that the story has made some little progress, though too unimportant to be described.

## VII.

## WILLIAM.

“Come to my side, come to my side,  
My second heart ! my blest ! my bride !  
We should have met last night, and ye  
Came not, but pleaded company ;  
Dear, gentle girl, as well as you,  
I had companions—choice ones, too—  
My fervent thoughts of thine and thee,  
A gallant, courteous company.  
Now, Ellinor, I do opine  
That yours was not so sweet as mine.”

## VIII.

## ELLINOR.

“Of mine, dear William, do not speak,  
Or my poor heart will break—will break !  
A secret ne’er had I before,  
And never wish a secret more.  
Now, do not frown, and I will tell  
That secret, black and horrible.  
And do not frown, ye Powers above,  
Though Harvey offers me his love ;  
O, William, save thyself and me,  
But save thyself immediately !”

## IX.

WILLIAM.

"Nay, Ellinor, I scorn his hate ;  
 His arm has no such length or weight  
 That thou shouldst flinch—that I should fear,  
 Or lose a moment's transport here.  
 But, if he loves thee—as he may—  
 'Tis for his good ; for this I say,  
 That, pure and holy as thou art,  
 Thy image could not walk his heart,  
 But leave a holy trace behind,  
 To mark its passage o'er his mind—  
 As angels tread this world of ours,  
 But leave no pressure on its flowers."

## X.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*

## XI.

A strange ship anchored in the bay,  
 Some weeks before the wedding-day ;  
 And a sickly seaman was sent to port,  
 Who told that the voyage was to be but short—  
 And the voyage short, with double pay,  
 Lured Ellinor's sailor-boy away.  
 He went to sea with the captain grim—  
 The ship returned, but brought not him ;

And few wad sail that ship again,  
Though a prouder thing ne'er swam the main—  
Though they saw nae fiend but the captain's e'e,  
And heard nae sound save the shrieking sea!

## XII.

And, ah! how Ellinor was changed,  
Her heart and happiness estranged;  
For sleep was a wilderness where lay  
Such things as never walked by day—  
When she'd start from an unvarying dream,  
And think she heard her Willie's scream,  
Or the fearful gulp, and hollow sonn'  
That the ocean gies when a ship gaes down!



## PART SECOND.

## I.

'Twas a summer-night, but the round moon's ray  
Made it look the sister twin of Day ;  
The meteor shot frae the sky's faint blue ;  
The cock cam' donn frae his perch and crew ;  
The howlet sat on a silent tree ;  
The laverock raise frae the dewy lea ;  
And the fox aroused by the glare in his den  
Fled farther away from the dwellings of men.  
On Ellinor's pillow the moon-beam fell ;  
To-night, for the first time, she slumbered well,  
For her breath was evenly-drawn and deep,  
And she lay as calm as a soul asleep ;  
But yet she dreamed, and the fair moon-beam  
Was no sae bright as her maiden-dream.

## II.

She dreamed she was lying, but waking wide,  
When her ain sweet William came to her side,  
And oh ! sae happy she was to see  
His snawy form and starlike e'e !  
“ I come,” he said, “ frae the land o' Soul,  
And frae Him that maketh the wounded whole,  
Frae the land o' Love and heavenly grace,  
Where happiness has her biding-place ;  
But dinna look sae sair on me,  
Lest my form should melt in your very e'e.

## III.

“ Our hameward voyage was nearly through,  
For lightly, lightly our good ship flew  
To the light-house blaze, revolving far,  
That comes round with a flash and goes off like a  
star.

I was counting my gains with an honest pride,  
When a rude hand plunged me in the tide ;  
'Twas a smothering gliff and a thought on thee,  
And Sorrow and Sin had done wi' me,  
And I seemed to feel a cauld han' creep  
Across my breast and fell asleep.  
I woke again, but my soul was free,  
The coral hang o'er my dead bodye,  
And the light was streaming attour my head,  
Of the crimson warmth and hue of bluid,  
For the violet rays on the surface dwell,  
To gaze on the heaven that's sae like themsel' !

## IV.

“ Away, away from the coral cave,  
Away and above the glittering wave,  
Farther aloft than the lark can flee,  
And farther aloft than eagles see;  
Beyond the last wave of the sea of air  
Whaur bodily beings never were ;—  
And I saw the back of the farthest star,  
And the place where the worlds of chaos are—  
Where angel foot hath never trod,  
The laboratory of Mighty God.

## V.

“ Then strength unto my soul was given  
To bear the happiness of heaven ;  
And the House of Mansions met my e’e,  
And grace had opened one for me.  
I could tell you tales that nane think lang,  
And sing ye a verse of an angel’s sang  
That would gar ye sigh away your breath,  
And long for the blessedness of death.

## VI.

“ But, holy as heaven, ye ken, maun be,  
I sometimes spen’ a thought on thee,  
For there it isna ca’d a crime  
To love the beautiful things o’ Time.  
Yestreen I hied me down my lane  
To the gay, green warld o’ my birth again

The setting sun on the mountain glowed,  
 Like the amethyst gate of the city of God ;  
 I heard the sound of the booming sea ;  
 I saw the squire with the fiendish e'e,  
 And past his stately mansion came  
 To a holier roof—your ain sweet hame :  
 I saw thee at an evening walk,  
 And overheard your sisters' talk,  
 I heard them speak of your wandering e'e,  
 And watched them greet when they spake of thee—  
 Of thee, and their father's hoary hair,  
 And—soul though I was—I could look nae mair !”

## VII.

The vision fled with the gray moon-beam,  
 Whose glint had gi'en her this timely dream :  
 “ We maunna, O we winna part,  
 Willie !” she screamed with a sudden start,  
 That rent the curtain o' sleep in twain  
 And gave her consciousness again.  
 Her brow that lang had throbb'd as sair  
 As if her heart had been beating there,  
 Grew calm and chill as morning-air.

## VIII.

The morning came—the household met—  
 And now, at length, nae cheek was wet :  
 Sire and motherless daughters three,  
 Gladder hearts there could hardly be.  
 The old man blessed them, and forth they hied  
 To see the flowers in their dewy pride,

And they smiled on ilka thing they saw,  
But Ellinor's smile was the sweetest ava.  
A' day she thought on her bonny dream,  
And wrought at her younger sister's seam,  
As silent as if she had begun  
The quiet of death ere life was done.

## IX.

But when the sun had sunken low,  
Her hand less steady grew, and slow,  
And—having asked her sire's consent—  
She went—they saw not where she went—  
She went to the blare of the booming sea  
To meet the squire with the fiendish c'e,  
And—strange as it may seem to tell—  
He came invited by hersel'.

## X.

His swarthy cheek had a guilty flush,  
But Ellinor saw it without a blush:  
“ Sir squire, I've ta'en a lover's vow,  
And ye must aid me to keep it now—  
Nay, speak not yet—and do not kneel,  
Methinks I know what ye ought to feel;  
On these fine cliffs awhile we'll go,  
And then descend to the beach below.

## XI.

“ How suddenly the sun comes down ! ”  
She cried, with something that seemed a frown ;

“ When last I looked from the rugged shore,  
He hang as round as a drop of gore,  
But already half of his orb is hid,  
And—Vengeance—my delay is chid !  
Come to my arms, false man, at length !—  
Come, while I hae a maniac’s strength !—  
Come, ere my purpose has time to shake !—  
I clasp thee, thus, for my William’s sake.”

## XII.

She threw her taper arms around him,  
And like the fold of a serpent, bound him :  
The heart-smote victim saw his fate,  
And owned its justice—too, too late ;  
He begged forgiveness—but there was none,  
And grace—but the day of grace was done :  
She flung herself from the fearfu’ steep,  
And hang one moment above the deep,  
And the last maddening word that came  
From her burning lips, was William’s name ;  
Her victim heard it, like a knell,  
And struggled—wavered—shrieked—and fell !  
The sun gave forth a blood-shot beam  
And vanished, like a fevered dream.

THE PLOUGHMAN LAD.  

---

NAE vials hae I to weet my cheek,  
And keep its colour fair;  
Nae drap o' balm save the balmy kiss  
That the ploughman lad lays there!  
The bonny brent o' his snawy brow,  
Has the gleed o' morning light,  
And the locks that peep frae his bonnet blue,  
Are dark as the winter night.

The toils that wad mak' the heartless sair,  
Ne'er mar the ploughman's glee;  
And when I praise his step sae light,  
He gies a' the praise to me.  
The land he tills is no his ain,  
For his handin' is but sma';  
But his wee cot-house and its plenishin',  
He wadna gie for't a'.

There is ae sweet bairnie at my fit,  
And anither on my knee—  
Wi' a the father in his form,  
And the mither in his e'e.  
Their father hies to the stibble-land,  
And my heart wad whiles be sad,  
Were it no for the smiles o' my bairnies twa,  
And the thoughts o' my ploughman lad.

---

### LANG HAE YE BEEN ROAMIN'.

AIR—" *Fee him, Father, fee him !*"

---

LANG hae ye been roamin', laddie,  
Lang hae I been grievin'—  
Life sae near its gloamin', laddie,  
'S hardly worth the livin'.

Mony merry days hae ye,  
Nought to mak' ye wearie—  
Whaur's the bliss ye promis'd me,  
When I was first your dearie ?

This poor heart so laden, laddie,  
Mind ye bow ye won it ?  
This poor cheek so fadin', laddie,  
Ken ye what has done it ?



Weel thou kens, bnt daurna spier  
Why this tear is stealin' ;  
Lang I tried to hide it here,  
And burst my heart concealin' !

I've had mony sorrows, laddie,  
Since thou wert my lover—  
I've had weary morrows, laddie,  
Now they're nearly over.

Then, when thou and thy poor lass,  
Ance and aye are parted—  
Think, oh, think, while thou wert fause,  
I was broken-hearted.

## IMPROVEMENT;

OR,

## THE COUNTRY CRACK:

A CONTER-CRACK.

---

GUDEWIFE.

HECH, Sirs! but auld fowk fast grow auld,  
And, when we're fairly bent twafauld  
Beneath the weight of years bygone,  
Time shortly slips a burden on!  
When threescore years hae ta'en the wing,  
The back-sprent sadly times its spring;  
And, underneath the withered brow,  
The mind itsel' will wither too;  
The snaw upon the thin, gray powe,  
Accords na wi' the leesome low  
Of yonth, gudeman; but yon and me  
May warm us wi' the memory

Of mony an artless, happy day,  
When our hearts had their simmer-play—  
For, lang as 'tis sin' first we met,  
Our daffin I remember yet.  
It was a time o' muckle glee,  
For little cark or care had we,  
And gowd was what we never saw,  
And puir fowk had nae pride ava,  
And rich fowk werena half sae dour,  
For even the vera lairds were poor!

## GUEDEMAN.

I dinna doubt, gudewife, ye're richt—  
Yet life, ye ken, 's an unco fecht;  
And when there's nane to tak' his pairt  
A chiel wad need a whinstane heart,  
A brow o' brass, or arm o' steel,  
Oh then the gowd does unco weel!  
The puir man must be mim and meek,  
But he that spends may also speak;  
And Favour, though she's ill to catch—  
A siller bullet\* kills the witch.  
We'll nae count Fortune's bountith sma'  
As lang's she hauds grim Want awa';  
For the warst colic, let me tell ye,  
That man can dree, 's an empty belly.

\* It is a well-known and accredited fact that witches when they choose to travel Incog., (that is, in the likeness of hares, &c.,) can only be shot by a piece of silver.

Although we're fairly down the brae,  
The dargers of a closing day,  
And are nae langer green and sappy,  
Yet, Janet lass, we're nae unhappy.  
We've had as muckle gear, ye'll grant,  
As balanc'd wear and frichtit want;  
And honest-got when guided weel  
Has aye a foot the brae to speel,  
And gin a harvest-storm should blaw  
There's lithe in an auld ruck or twa.  
This world has things in't worth the loving;  
And, what is mair, it's aye improving."

## GUDEWIFE.

A braw improvement wi' a vengeance!  
The stimulation o' steam engines!  
It's that that's gien us a' the steer  
O' fecin'-markets twice a year,  
That tines a herd by parkin' nowt,  
That fosters pride by length'ning out  
The distance 'tween a but and ben,  
That works wi' mills instead o' men.  
Nae mair the farmer dowfs his bonnet  
And gies his servants some auld sonnet,  
Or brak's his bread at table wi' them,  
Or looks as though he liked to see them:  
Nae mair his servants try to funder,  
And do beyond their master's order;  
Nae langer seem they interested  
To keep his gear frae being wasted.

What now will pay the whaler's toil,  
When fowk burn reek instead of oil ?  
Ye kent my cousin, Jock MacRob,  
That used to mak' a canny job  
By sailin' wi' the lads that sail  
O'er northern seas to hunt the whale :—  
Hae mercy on us ! how a storm  
Will shake the bodie's bedstrae for him !  
For, as their ship was hameward bound,  
Some towmonds syne, puir Johnny drowned ;—  
But there his better fortune lay,  
For he is happier far than they,  
His comrades—spared to live, alas !  
Heart-broken wi' the licht o' gas !

## GUDEMAN.

Gudewife, gudewife, though ne'er sae blest  
There's something in's that winna rest,  
Forever painting to the min'  
Some happier period—auld lang syne.  
Ye look abroad and think ye see  
Naething unchanged save yon and me ;  
Ye miss the muirs whaur maukins hirpled,  
Begilt wi' whins or heather-purpled,  
Ye mind when we were bairns thegither  
What ploys we had amang the heather,  
And thus forget to ask what profit  
To man or beast could then come off it ;  
Ye miss the tacksman's auld clay biggin's  
Wi' hamely thack-and-raipit riggin's,

That really had nae charm I ken,  
Except the honest, simple men  
Wha trusted Providence as weel 's  
To put their heids aneath sic beils.  
We see these changes round about us—  
Distinct, because they lie without us ;  
But, Janet, could we look within,  
A change even in ourselves we'd fin' :  
The world of Nature doesna stan',  
And wherefore should the warld of Man ?  
Richt weel I like to hear you crack—  
But dinna wish the auld times back ;  
For wulsome muirs and roads, beside,  
That some might travel—nane could ride,  
And lichtly rented lands that gae  
As licht a crap the rent to pay,  
Are weel awa' : we'll no regret,  
Or murmur at their absence yet.

## GUDEWIFE.

The roads ! we never thought them lang  
However rough or far to gang,  
When men and nowt in squads thegither  
To markets hied across the heather ;  
Or lads and lasses frae their wark  
Gaed linkin' barefit to the kirk,  
Whaur, glad of ought to rest their haunches,  
They worshipt God frae forms and benches.  
And oh, the blithesome coming hame !  
When hearts that lowed wi' mutual flame

Bade honestly by ane anither,  
And found or feared nae flytin' mither;  
For miserable was the life  
Of ony mither no a wife :  
Fowk on the vera road wad shun her  
As though she seemed a warld's won'er.  
But now the frailty's grown sae common  
As scarce to raise a blush on woman ;  
And when a servant-lass fa's by,  
Her comrades pass her with a sigh  
Of fellow-feeling, and a doubt  
Wha's turn may come the next about.

## GUEDEMAN.

Let that foul flee stick to the wa'—  
We see but canna mend the flaw.  
And as for kirk-road haivers, I  
Aye found them graceless, dull, and dry,  
And our auld topics, bit by bit,  
Ye'll get them on the kirk-road yet.  
The doncer sort to show their gumption  
Explain the mysteries of redemption,  
And make it weel appear to a'  
To be nae mystery ava !  
The vera virtuous, always willing  
To save a sinner or—a shilling,  
Tire a' ane's patience but their ain  
Wi' cutty-stools and stots and grain,  
Till, stupified, bumbaized, or vext,  
They'll whiles forget the very text.

But surely, Janet lass, ye'll own  
How rapidly our comfort's grown ;  
And, by a' parties but and ben,  
How pleasant in a storm to ken  
The wind and rain beat on a roof  
That 's wind-secure, and water-proof.  
I mind since 'twas believed the win'  
Was sent us as a scourge for sin,  
To preach a warnin' to the nation,  
Or teach a Christian resignation ;  
And some, ower-anxious to be sainted,  
When damage might have been prevented,  
Sat still aneath the storm, and said,  
“ 'Twas raised by Heaven, and would be laid.”

There was a storm, (and weel I may  
Remember't till my dying day :)  
The Spring was in, bnt—save the name o't,—  
The season hadna great to claim o't,  
Sunshine—it scarcely had a blink o't,  
And nae ane kent weel what to think o't ;  
It look'd like Winter come to see  
What like a hizzie Spring wad be.  
The wind was blusterin' and rough,  
The moon aye circled wi' a brugh ;  
Auld wives had watched for months thegither,  
She changed, but never changed the weather  
And warldly carls, grown tengu wi' age,  
Began to notice frets and rage,—  
For even their sturdiest hands confessed  
That biggit land was far the best,



The humblest shielin'—worth possessing,  
 A blazin' fire—an unco blessing,  
 The brawest claith—what kept the heat,  
 The best o' stacks—a stack o' peat !  
 Even then—to show their zeal and faith—  
 (And, troth, they had anench o' baith,)  
 Would squads around the kirk forgather,  
 Wha stayed at hame in better weather,—  
 As if, when droukit to the skin,  
 The word could sink the farther in—  
 Or rains, that gar the rashes rise,  
 Could aid the “growth of grace” likewise.

## GUDEWIFE.

Nae doubt, our winters whiles were dreary  
 E'en then—and could they aye be cheerie ?  
 But now, the wee-bit weary day  
 Maun travel ower us as it may ;  
 For gane is a' that lifesome sport  
 That wad have made the langest short.  
 The poor man's wit, his mirth, his merit,  
 His luckless independent spirit,  
 The soul within him—rent and torn—  
 Down to the ground he tills, is worn !  
 Oh had we back the merry min',  
 The honest joy of auld lang syne !

In blinterin', blearin', bleak November—  
 When the wan sun seems but an ember,  
 And scarcely turns his noddle till 's,  
 But crochils round the southlan' hills ;—

Came rattlin', roarin' Hallowe'en,  
 And drave a' sadness frae the scene;  
 When dool, and care, and thinkin'-lang  
 Were only kent frae some auld sang  
 Made by a joe in sad deray,  
 Whase love was fause or far away.

Then Yule-day, gladsome as a bride,  
 The heart that beats in Winter's side!  
 Though time has gane a waefu' length  
 Since last we saw it in its strength,  
 I hear it bizzin' at my lug  
 Just like a weel-barm't nappy jug;—  
 Its rantin' roar grows daft and dafter,  
 A hurricane of glee and laughter—  
 There never met a blither quorum—  
 The daucers skirl for Tullygorum,  
 The vera bairnies join the fun,  
 And stot like hailstones on the grun',  
 The gravest grauny looks applause,  
 And lucky-daddy hoasts ha-ha's!

GUDEMAN.

Enough, enough. We've been thegither  
 Ower lang to conter ane anither.  
 Auld ways are sanctified by distance,  
 When wrapt in time's mysterious mist ance,  
 And there's a certain point of view,  
 Nothing beheld from which is true:  
 As when the magic moonbeam fa's  
 On auld Strathbogie's castle-wa's,—

Ae chiel observes't frae fair or revel,  
Gangs hame and says, he saw the devil ;  
A second, only tells his people  
The kirk has got anither steeple :  
Some ither day they baith see weel  
Enough it's neither kirk nor deil.

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### CULLODEN.

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[The following song, which was published in Upper Canada about five years ago and sufficiently well received among the Scotch people there, was composed to the tune and on the model of one of those ballad-foundlings which from time to time have appeared in our literature, possessing generally as much beauty, or dignity, or grandeur as to show that their births had been superior to their fortunes. True, their country has taken care of them, and, like noble wards, they have repaid their guardians well : but the verses appended to my own have never, as far as I am aware, been published before ; it is hoped, however, that sufficient merit will be found in them to justify their insertion here.]

LoUD on the hills were the wintry winds howling,  
Dark on the heavens the tempest was scowling,  
And bitter and sad were the tears that were floodin'  
Young Ellen's dark eye, as she gazed on Culloden.

“ Blow, ye wild winds ; though my heart blood is  
freezing,  
Ye'll never add more to my griefs with your teasing,

For ye sweep o'er the field where my lover was  
trodden

By the foot of the hireling that fought on Culloden!

“There's that in your howlings, from which I discover

That the sorrows of Ellen will soon be all over,  
When this deep-throbbing heart shall be cold as the  
sod on

The breasts of the heroes that fell on Culloden!

“Oh, little I knew of the nature of sorrow,  
When the clans drew their swords, and I roused my  
young hero—

‘Go, meet the proud foe as our sires did on Flodden,  
Go, Fergus, and die for your Prince on Culloden!’

“He went—not a step had he flinched when we found  
him,

His claymore was bloody, the dead lay around him :  
He fell—as the fears of my heart were forebodin',  
When the freedom of Albyn was lost on Culloden!

“Oh, sweet be his sleep, for his death-bed was gory;  
And long may his child live to tell the sad story :  
For me, my fond heart has long fixed its abode on  
The spot where he fell, and shall burst on Culloden.

“But he hears not the words which my passion has  
spoken,  
He feels not the pangs which my proud heart have  
broken,  
The blood-thirsty stranger may still stretch his rod  
on  
The land of the Gael, but there’s peace on Culloden !”

---

I might sing o’ my country, its deep glens and foun-  
tains,  
Of its woods, and its rivers, and steep-rising moun-  
tains—  
But I’ll sing of a battle—the saddest in story,  
Of wintry Culloden, and Cumberland gory.

’Twas the sixteenth of April, I’ll ever remember,  
The night it was dark as the darkest December,  
The moon came by fits, something awful forebodin’  
To the clans the next day on the muir of Culloden.

As we lay under arms our chiefs were debating,  
Some were for fighting and some for retreating,  
But Lochiel, and Lord Drummond, and young Lewie  
Gordon,  
Drew their swords and declared they would die on  
Culloden.

The war-pipe is playing—the fierce charge is sound-  
ing ;  
From the wild rocky hills are the echoes rebounding ;  
If the charge had been given as the clans did at  
Flodden,  
The day had been ours on the muir of Culloden.

Some brave clans were there who did never appear,  
And for some cause or other they kept in the rear ;  
“ I fear there is treachery,” the Prince was heard  
sobbin’,  
“ Alas for the clans on the muir of Culloden.”

The Camerons, M’Phersons, and the ClanRonalds,  
The Gordons, M’Gregors, and the M’Donalds,  
They rushed to the charge, and thousands were  
trodden,  
Determined to conquer or die on Culloden.

Nae mair the pipes play “ Prince Charlie is coming,”  
Nae mair we hurra that the red coats are running,  
But now for our Prince every Scots heart is sob-  
bin’—  
And could lie the lads on the muir of Culloden !

## SONG.

## FILL HIGH THE GOBLET.



## I.

FILL high the goblet, fill it up,  
And, lady, drink one glass with me;  
The ruddy wine and ruby lip—  
What fitter company could be?  
But were it Rosamunda's cup,  
I'd drain the bitter cup for thee.

## II.

Fill high the goblet; Beauty pours  
A flood where every drop is bliss;  
To Arab's lip the summer-showers  
Have no such sweetness in their kiss;  
For hearts are beating—warm as ours,  
And cheeks are blushing—deep as this!

## COLIN AND PEGGY.

AFTER AN OLD BALLAD.



YOUNG Peggy was the bonniest lass  
That ever tript the green,  
And Colin was the blithest lad  
That she had ever seen :  
He lang had loved and aften vowed  
That she wad be his ain,  
And aft the wedding-day was set,  
And aft was set again ;  
At last he told her he was doomed beyond the seas  
to go,  
But the bonny lassie's answer was, Oh no, no !

“ Now dinna greet, my bonny lass,  
Ye canna gang wi' me—  
The blast that's blawin' on the wave  
Must bear me off from thee ;



The ship is anchored in the bay,  
The boat is on the shore,  
That waits to carry me away—  
And so we meet no more ;  
For there's a fate bids thee to stay, and forces me  
to go,"  
But the bonny lassie's answer was, Oh no, no !

"Twa hearts were never tied sae close  
But fate could break the strings,  
Nor happiness so great (though we  
Were happier than kings),  
But one dark moment could destroy  
And level wi' the dust :  
That moment's come, the strings that bound  
My fate to thine are burst !  
For I am doomed to lea' thee, love, and far away  
to go,"  
But the bonny lassie's answer was, Oh no, no !

"Ye'll soon forget, ye'll soon forget,  
When ance I'm fairly gane,  
And I shall live and die abroad—  
Beloved, bewailed by nane !  
Or it may be my better fate  
To sleep beneath the wave,  
That no cauld maiden may pass by  
In scorn poor Colin's grave !  
Then dinna greet, my bonny lass, for we must  
sunder so,"  
But the bonny lassie's answer was, Oh, no, no !

She dashed the burning tears away  
That gathered in her een,  
And left him with a look of woe  
That blinded baith his een ;  
Her Colin only spoke in jest,  
He kenned her heart was true,  
And only wished, where'er he went,  
That she might wander too.  
And now he cries, "O can ye tell whaur my true  
love did go?"  
But ilka body's answer was aye, No, no !

They hurried him away to sea,  
The sun was on the main,  
And many a breast was heaving with  
The heaving ocean then ;  
And many an eye was wet that gazed  
Upon the fading shore,  
But Colin only wept for her  
He thought to see no more.  
And now he cries, "O can ye tell whaur my true  
love did go?"  
But ilka body's answer was aye, No, no !

One night he stood and watched the wave  
Assume its darkest hue,  
When a voice behind him softly said,  
" Young man, what troubles you ?"  
The voice was hers that aye spake peace

To him when care opprest !  
He turned—'twas she, the maid he lo'ed,  
That sprang into his breast !  
And now she asks him, "Wha was right—the youth  
that vowed to go,  
Or she that always answer'd with Oh no, no?"

Now merrily merrily scuds the ship  
Across the foaming sea,  
And blithely Colin's bosom beats,  
And bright is Peggy's e'e ;  
The winds are whistling through the masts,  
Like sea-maws screaming high,  
And the ship-boy from the topmast sings  
Aloud that land is nigh ;  
Then Colin says, "Wad ye refuse wi' me to kirk to  
go?"  
And the bonny lassie's answer is, Oh no, no !

## KING CARE.



HURRA, hurra for the skeleton-steed  
So rattling-dry and bare,  
That the night-wind groans in his hollow bones—  
'Tis the steed of the good King Care!

His crown is the regal bonnet  
That kings are wont to wear;  
The diamonds are brilliant upon it,  
But still 'tis the cap of King Care!

He purses the brow of Beauty  
As if his wealth lay there;  
But down below in the coffer-heart  
Is the safe of good King Care!

He's lord of the breast that hath love in't,  
He lives in the breast that hath none,  
He'll come to a wedding without a bidding,  
And stay when the guests are gone!

We are owing a debt to Nature,  
King Care hath got the bill,  
And he makes us pay on the promised day  
Or before it an he will !

Hurra, hurra for the skeleton steed  
Whose bones are so dry and bare—  
But the early grave and a broken heart  
Have rebelled against good King Care !

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### A SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORTH POLE-ISH.

~~~~~  
I.

O THOU\* whose ever trembling ray  
I've watched grow wan at dawning day,  
Of half our lives the guiding star,  
The seaman greets thee from afar ;  
For thou, that light'st our humble lot,  
Art all in heaven that changeth not,  
And teachest those thou shinest upon  
To love but once and love but one !

\* The Pole-star.

## II.

The earth begins to lose its snow,  
And, O my Nuna, I must go,  
For see ! the waves curl in the bay  
And wait to bear me far away !  
The genius of the sunken rock  
Shall sing to warn me from the shock ;  
The spirit of the storm is laid—  
And what can make my girl afraid ?

## III.

There is a land—as thou mayst hear—  
Where darkness lords not half the year,  
Where life's best things are bought and sold,  
And nothing save the heart is cold ;  
My love, a better land is ours,  
With icy cliffs and lichen flowers,  
And frosty sky of cloudless blue,  
For every heart beneath is true !

## IV.

There's not a sparkle in the sea  
That speaks of purity like thee,  
Thy ermine vest is white as snow,  
But fairer is the breast below !  
And, Nuna, when I'm far away,  
Speak oft a spell-word to the bay  
And sing across the dashing foam—  
“ Ye billows, bear a lover home !”

## SONG.

WHEN FIRST I LEFT MY NATIVE HILL.

AIR—" *Miss Forbes' farewell to Banff.*"

## I.

WHEN first I left my native hill,  
A maiden proud of beauty's power,  
My heart was like a prattling rill  
Reflecting ilka wee, wee flower ;  
For I had wooers mony ane,  
And I had smiles to gie to a',  
Till Willie won me for his lane—  
And just was forced to gang awa' !

## II.

Now wha hae I to hand my heid  
When weary thoughts hae made it sair ?  
And wha to watch the tears I shed  
And brush them wi' his raven hair ?

And how could my sad e'e be dry  
When Willie's loot a tear-drap fa' ?  
For wae was he, and wae was I,  
The dreary day he gaed awa'.

## III.

Oh, dear to me 's yon glen so gay,  
Whaur lasses meet their joes at e'en,  
And dear to me 's yon heather brae  
Whaur winds the shepherd's path sae green ;  
For ower yon brae my Willie gaed,  
And there the last of him I saw ;  
And down yon bloomy glen we strayed,  
The very day he gaed awa' !

## IV.

When morning comes wi' rosy light  
I wander up yon heather-brae,  
And try to hear his step at night  
When gloamin' faulds the e'e of day ;  
The time he set is hardly gane,  
But oh, the time gangs unco slaw !  
And sair I weary for him hame—  
The bonny lad that's far awa' !



## THE METAMORPHOSIS OF A SCHOLAR INTO A BOOK :

A NEW TRANSLATION OF OVIDIUS NASO BY OVIDIUS  
SO-SO ; WITH INTERPOLATIONS, CONTAINING, AMONG  
OTHER MATTERS, AN ADDRESS TO THE SUN, BY OSSIAN  
MAK'-VERSE-ON.



[The author is aware that he gives publicity to his "Metamorphosis" at the risk of being identified with the whimsical individual he describes. The verses themselves were written almost at a sitting, in a fit of boisterous good humour, occasioned by a sudden burst of fine weather. This is mentioned, not as an excuse, but as an explanation. The reflective mind discovers, as Shakspeare tells us, tongues in trees and sermons in stones: in those trees the whimsical finds ears also, and auditors in these stones; and this is far from an equivocal advantage to the solitary, who never feels himself alone among birds, and bushes, and flowers, but exists in a solitude of solitudes when it is formed by removing the trees and flowers and planting stupid and unsympathizing scions of humanity in their place.]

### I.

The sky was overspread with lurid smoke,

Or what appeared so, from a conflagration,  
But 'twas the rising sun who just awoke

In time to reach the *down-cast* railway-station  
Before the train began its locomotion,  
And, in a cloud of steam, broke from the ocean.

## II.

Him now addressed a strange though simple wight,  
Who, in ripe years, was yet a mere man-child,  
An easy soul, capacious of delight  
In all its shapes:—a flower upon the wild;  
The mountain-breeze; the merry neat-herd boy,  
Whose laugh breaks down with an o'erload of joy;

## III.

In summer-days, the all-embracing bath;  
In winter's cold, the walk against the wind;  
The melancholy sounds that autumn hath;  
The spring's gay, fluttering garments just unpinned;  
His book at table (for he always read  
The while he ate); his waking hours in bed;

## IV.

A shower in sunshine, when the rambler feels  
He walketh in a rainbow; a stream's side,  
Where the glad waters hold no muddy eels,  
But trouts like meteors shoot, and leap, and glide;  
A holiday—that Sunday, out of starch;  
The church,—especially the road to church!

## V.

With him a walk was medicine and cosmetic:  
To sit like Patience on a monument  
Was not for the determined per'patetic,  
Even in deep grief,—though latterly he went

Stooping, as if he'd suddenly grown old, or  
Had Patience' monument upon his shoulder.

## VI.

He lived unmarried, though he loved a wedding,  
And has been known to take a lady's hand,  
Though, certes, never at the parson's bidding.  
This *singular* feeling rose, I understand,  
From reading some sad verses wherein wedlock  
(Rhymes must be had) was made to chime with  
padlock.

## VII.

Another reason:—once he loved a maid,  
Named Elspet when they both had scarce a  
guinea,  
But sudden wealth had turned the damsel's head,  
And suddenly her name turned Elspetina;  
Yet dream he sometimes would of Elsie's charms,  
And waken with the pillow in his arms!

## VIII.

Yet he allowed 'twas pleasant (though 'twould pall  
If such a sight were shown in every place)  
To see a father catch his features all  
Reflected in a baby's simple face;  
But—woful inconsistency, alas!—  
He, for himself, preferred a looking-glass.

## IX.

Perhaps, he might have married, but with  
His whims and spouse, there must have been a  
war :  
In short, 'twas better to be born beneath  
That anti-nuptial Occidental star,\*  
Mention of which is in the dedication  
Of the Holy Bible's authorized translation.

## X.

But difficulties grew, and met, and brought  
Forth other difficulties. Times were bare  
And hard as any nut, and, when he thought  
To find the kernel—was no kernel there !  
He never would complain, or some were willing  
To lend their ears, and some to lend a shilling.

## XI.

As for his looks : his first appearance showed  
The happy soul within a shining case ;  
But having to remove from this abode—  
He had neglected it of late ; his face,  
Once round as heaven's, much care had now made  
gibbous ;  
Such was the mister wight that spoke to Phœbus.

\* I need not say that Queen Elisabeth, of glorious (and celebratarian) memory, is here referred to.

## XII.

“ All-glorious Phœbus ! art not thou so high  
That man is utterly beneath thy notice ?  
His world—to him so great—’s ‘ all in thine eye’  
And some blest ‘ Betty Martin’ in the sky  
Farther above us than the poet’s thought is,  
Who swears the lark’s song reaches their abode,  
And hints as much concerning his own ode.

## XIII.

“ How fares thy brother, the Emperor of China ?  
We read him lately an ungracious homily ;  
(’Tis very good he sends us so much rhino :)  
And how are th’ other members of the family ?  
It’s shrewdly thought, our earth has to dread some’at  
From that scape-grace, Prince-royal of a comet.

## XIV.

“ Far-shooting god ! the favourite of all  
Things that upon this verdant carpet roll,—  
Of factory-girl, who from her savings small  
Contrives to sport a cotton parasol—  
Of Homer’s self, although he could not see—  
But chief, of an enthusiast, (like me !)

## XV.

“ Whose morning walk gives him an appetite  
For rolls and coffee, and the pleasant fume  
Of misty flowers—who, in his stroll at night,  
The mountain climbeth like a blithe bridegroom

To meet Diana\* reeking from the chase,  
With-streaks of sweat o'er her red, dusty face :

## XVI.

“Then home-returning at a break-neck pace,  
How swells his heart with every large emotion !  
His feet and his ideas try a race !  
'Tis midnight, but his spirit walks in Goshen !  
Till forced at length to pause and gasp for breath,  
Or words, he speaks—scarce knowing what he saith :

## XVII.

“A bush of broom becomes Saint Stephen's chair,  
The stars applaud with kerchiefs from the gallery,  
The very stones cry ‘hear,’—and from his air,  
You know he does not speak for place or salary,  
But is, in truth, an iron man-of-Sparta,  
And grasps his stick as if the Magna Charta.

## XVIII.

“Perhaps he makes the poor man's claim his task,  
And vouches that a nobleness resides  
In poverty, found no where else ; they ask  
‘Whither a beggar set a-horseback rides,’  
Which he retorts, and makes the boldest stagger—  
‘Whither rides he, who rides upon the beggar ?’

\* The moon ; and reference is made to the phenomena of her rising in droughty weather.

## XIX.

“ Perhaps, in pure benevolence, he enacts  
Some musty superannuated laws—  
Poll-taxes, test-and-corporation acts—  
So that he may repeal them with applause ;  
Builds up old jails and fills them with sad men,  
To have the joy of pulling down again.

## XX.

“ The joyous watch-dog interrupts his speeches,  
And now he’s something else—an altered man,  
A rake reformed, perhaps—and, as he reaches  
His bed, declares contrite, that Sheridan,  
And Fox, and Falstaff were sad dogs, but he  
A sadder still—a Cerberus—all the three !

## XXI.

“ O Sun ! thou comest not purposely to shine,  
Or hurt a chandler’s trade, we know—because  
The world had light anterior to thine,  
Although ’tis hard to say how good it was ;  
Two things are clear—and scarcely more, alas !  
’Twas neither from long-sixes then, nor gas.

## XXII.

“ Could men but see it as thy garment, much  
Dispute would be avoided certainly,  
For none would be so rash as doubt that such  
A thing as ante-solar light might be ;  
As if a baby’s cap could not be made  
Until the bantling’s self had shown its head.

## XXIII.

“O Sun, I beg a boon! Thon hast the power,  
Although unexercised of late, to change  
Into a tree, a river, or a flower,

All living things that hill and valley range;—  
The days of man, O Sun, are few and ill,  
And the duration ’s half the misery still!”

## XXIV.

Apollo heard the oration with a nod  
Expressive of his indolent consent,  
Just like old Homer’s all-gods-ruling god;  
And this he said or (more correctly) meant  
To say: “I apprehend your meaning, Sir,  
It shall be done,—what say you to a fir?”

## XXV.

“Say to a fir! a thing of deals and rosin!  
You can’t be serious; my good fellow, say  
A cobbler, rather: I’d have sooner chosen  
To be a snipe on twelfth (of August) day,  
Or Balaam’s ass, e’en had the brute been gored  
Both by the angel’s and the madman’s sword.

## XXVI.

“The oak is much too large, the larch too lean,  
The aspen’s preferable—all alive  
As far as vegetable life within  
And wind without can make it:—one might thrive  
Even in a beech if not condemned to bear  
The names of Damon Hound and Delia Hare.



## XXVII.

“ A tree ’s a very pretty thing, I own,  
By hill-side—valley—homestead—far or near,  
And in the interstices of a town  
Or its suburban skirts disclosing, here  
And there, a house crawled out of town by stealth,  
To touch the country’s garment-hem for health.

## XXVIII.

Make me a book!” Anon his clothes, without  
The intervention of a paper-mill,  
Fall down in quires; his blood grows double stout  
To all appearance, but has life in’t still;  
The branching veins have blackened into lines;  
And all his gold upon the edges shines.

## XXIX.

The volume is illustrated by Phiz,  
His joint-bones still are hinges though called  
pauses,  
Excepting that the large intestine is  
A colon still; the chapters, sections, clauses,  
Are all found, somehow, somewhere in the brain.—  
When shall a book like this be made again?

## SONG.

AIR—" *The Meeting of the Waters.*"

THERE 's a star on the sky, and a flower on the lea,  
Like the blush of thy cheek, and the glance of thy  
e'e ;

Thou art sweet to my soul, as thy voice to my ear,  
And dear to my bosom—ye know not how dear !

I hae been on the waters, and ower the wide main ;  
The blue hills of Scotland are round me again,  
Unchanged in their aspect, unchanged in their hue—  
Are the maidens amang them as changeless and  
true ?

I've seen other maidens wi' blushes divine,  
And eyes like a wine-cup in sparkles, or thine,  
But turned frae their bosoms, all fair as they be,  
For the loveliest only reminds me of thee !

Though dreary the mountain when plaided with  
mist,  
How it smiles into grace, by the summer-shine  
kissed !  
Such a shade over me had been fated to roll,  
But that thou wert a sun-beam, and came to my soul !

---

## LOVE, POOR LOVE !

~~~~~

## I.

THE maniac-maiden singeth aye  
Of love—poor love,  
And still the ower-come of her lay  
Is poor, poor love !  
Her tortured spirit hath confessed  
Its secret on the rack,  
But what shall soothe her troubled breast,  
Or bring its quiet back ?

## II.

A weary story is the tale  
Of love—poor love ;  
Sweet eyes grow dim and soft cheeks pale  
For poor, poor love.

When hearts are fou, it's aft their bliss  
That's foremost to rin ower,  
And love with its heart-fillingness,  
Is thus a fatal dower.

## III.

The maniac looks to heaven high  
For love—poor love,  
And reads a lesson frae the sky  
Of poor, poor love :  
The wandering orbs though bright are cold,  
The stars that burn ne'er rove,—  
And earth the same sad tale has toïd  
Of poor, poor love !

## DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

A PASTORAL.



'Twas nichtfa'; the raven had gane to his rest,  
And hushed was the hum of the bee,  
The head of the waterfowl lay on his breast,  
As he slept on the banks of the Dee.

'Twas nichtfa'; and then I was buchtin' my yowes,  
How blest! for my charmer was there!  
Ye shepherds recline whaur the heather-bell grows,  
And I'll tell you of Phebe the fair.

The shadow fell short at the foot o' the birk—  
For it chanced to be heicht o' the day—  
And the laverock was silent, that sang when the  
mirk  
Of the night had scarce melted away.

My flocks left the knowes overpowered wi' the heat,  
And I overpowered wi' care,  
But the bushes beneath made a caller retreat,  
For the broom-bush and whins blossom there.

I took up my pipe, and it breathed a saft strain—  
My Phebe had called it divine—  
It sang me asleep, and I saw her again,  
For I dreamed that the maiden was mine.

Now judge, ye fond shepherds, what was my surprise  
When I found the fair shepherdess near!  
For I woke from my slumber, and opened my eyes  
Upon a' that my bosom hauds dear!

I tauld her the dreams she inspired with a sigh—  
“O why are not things as they seem?  
Is nothing but wretchedness real? or, why  
Is not life—as they call it—a dream?”

I clasped her enraptured; she sank in my arms—  
Smiles, blushes, and beauty all o'er—  
I kissed her and tasted a thousand dear charms  
I never had dreamed o' before!

We hae biggit a cot in yon bonny green howe,  
Wi' its blue bells and gowans so fair,  
And the hare that came limpin' and listened our  
vow,  
Shall sleep in security there!

When morn aff her eyes shakes the lang dripping  
hair,  
Our flocks are at liberty too,  
And oh, it is caller to drink the fresh air  
When the half o't is incense and dew!

When the heather that blooms on the mountain-  
tap plays  
Wi' the last reddenin beam o' the sun,  
We fauld our wee flocks,—and our toilsomest days  
As sweetly as holidays run!

Thus, smooth and uncounted, the hours pass away,  
And I fancy my bliss is complete ;—  
O pleasing delusion! for ilka new day  
Brings me a new pleasure more sweet!

Unclogged by reflections that make the heart sair,  
We'll die, as we've lived, in bliss ;  
And the warld beyond the dark grave shall be fair,  
For our love makes a heaven o' this!

## THE MOUNTAINS O' SNAW.

AIR—" *Braes o' Caledonia.*"

WHEN joy's young breath was on my cheek—my  
e'e without a tear,  
When first I saw my Mary—when first I saw my  
dear,  
My heart it bounded wildly as the wildest winds  
that blaw,  
And as free as the erne on the mountains o' snaw.

When the wood shook in the wind and the stars  
seemed shaking too,  
How deeply I hae drank frae her loving eye o' blue!  
But now she wanders lanely and I am far awa'—  
Far, far frae my Mary and the mountains o' snaw!



But the tether tugs the harder the farther frae the  
stake,  
And the farther that we wander the mair we feel  
its check :  
Such is the tie that binds me to her that's far awa',  
So distant and so dear are the mountains o' snaw !

O Scotland, thou art mistress of the mountain and  
the glen—  
How smiling are thy maidens, how gallant are thy  
men !  
So lovely are the violets within thy glens that blaw,  
So warm the hearts that beat amang the mountains  
o' snaw !

How sweetly smiles the rising sun—he rises on my  
hame,  
Wi' its blue, snaw-crested mountains like ocean in  
its faem !  
Though here by cruel fortune I'm kickit like a ba',  
It may yet tak' a sten' to the mountains o' snaw !

Ance mair to clasp my Mary,—'twould banish a'  
my pain !  
Ance mair to ca'r my dearie ! ance mair to ca'r my  
ain !  
Though a'thing here were lovely yet I would leave  
it a'  
For Mary and a cot amang the mountains o' snaw !

## I'VE SEEN HER.



I'VE seen her—I've seen her in visions ere now,  
But couthie her look and unwrinkled her brow,  
When the love-lore of womanhood gleamed in here'e,  
Whose orb was a heaven ever cloudless to me.

I've seen her—I've seen her ! arrayed like a bride,  
In a rose-veil of blushes she comes to my side,  
With a smile that is always as true as it seems,  
And words that could only be spoken in dreams !

I've seen her—I've seen her ! she aye had her due  
In the gowd-dream of morning that's nearest to true,  
In the day-dream of life she is a'thing that's fair,  
But the dark dream of midnight—O why is she  
there ?

I've seen her—I've seen her ! but ne'er till yes-  
treen  
Wi' the blush aff her cheek, wi' the licht frae her  
e'en ;  
'Twas the first time her presence was aught like a  
pain,  
And I winna be weel till I see her again !

## GODIVA.

A STORY OMITTED BY HUME.



The story of this noble woman has been frequently told. It is to be found in Matthew of Westminster, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, in Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, and in Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*.

Leofric, Earl of Leicester, acted an important part in the early politics of England, for, living in the reign of Edward the Confessor, he consolidated and headed an opposition to the famous Earl Godwin. Coventry formed a part of his feudal domains, and had been subjected—probably not by him—to a severe and impolitic exaction. His gentle lady was, as she had wisdom to be, the deliverer of the town; the manner in which she effected this, is the subject of the following ballad. Hume, who tells the stories of *Elfreda* and *Elfrida* (of which the very air they breathe is romance) on the authority of William of Malmesbury, forgetting that the elder historian, William himself, avows as much as a suspicion of their authenticity, having only met with them in the works of the minstrels,—Hume makes no mention of *Godiva*.

O GENTLE reader, there is naught  
Could make thy heart so sore,  
As opening an old book to find  
Its sweetest pages tore—  
To miss the tale, whose truthfulness  
Makes pampered spirits whole,  
Whose heartfulness has warmth enough  
To give the thing a soul.

Such lines there are, so full of life,  
With joy so warm and lush,  
I've read, and blushed the more to catch  
My hot cheeks at a blush ;  
I've felt a pulse in every page,  
In every finger end,  
And given the book the very grasp  
I would have given a friend :  
Yet all this warmth and gush of life,  
A stern hand would let out,  
Because some slight exactitude  
Had not emerged from doubt ;  
For history has deflowered herself,  
And like a courtier flings  
Her morning-beams, with all their glare  
On the cold heights of kings,  
And courts, and camps ; but ne'er enquires,  
And does not seem to know,  
What great hearts beat beneath a fold  
Of nature's vest below.

## I.

Lord Leofric is stern and proud,  
And rules with iron sway ;  
And few but haughty Leofric,  
Could speak his lady nay :  
For she hath pled, as woman pleads,  
Against the mailed hand  
Of impost, which, with crushing weight,  
Breaks down the groaning land.

## II.

“ And, O, Lord Leofric, it is  
A bitter thing to see  
How even Starvation’s self looks fierce  
Whene’er it looks on thee !  
For voices that the heavens will hear  
Their suits have vainly made—  
Though every prayer hath been forgot,  
But this one—‘ Give us bread.’  
Regain thy people’s love—thy own ;  
Relax thy stern demand—  
Lord Leofric, love is not held  
By such an iron hand.”

## III.

“ Now, hear me, lady, once for all—  
I tell thee, by the Rood !  
I’ll not relax my stern demand,  
Nor change my present mood,  
Until”—“ Till when, Lord Leofric ?—  
I beg it as a boon.”  
“ Until thou ridest nakedly  
Through Coventry at noon !”

## IV.

These haughty words, proud Leofric,  
Thou speakest but in a jest,  
And little knowest the earnestness  
That warms a woman’s breast.

Godiva holds him by his oath,  
And rideth through the town—  
Her maidens having doffed her robes,  
And let her long hair down ;  
Which, as if angel-wings should come  
Between us and the sun,  
Conceals a beauty else too bright  
For aught to look upon.

## V.

But Leofric, unequal now  
To change her gentle mind,  
Commands that all the doors be shut,  
And every window blind ;  
And every townsman, more than this,  
Closes his eyes in prayer—  
And listens for the palfrey's tread,  
For Freedom's voice is there.

## VI.

And, nestling in her silken locks,  
The gentle dame rode on ;  
And, ah ! no knight in panoply  
Such victory ever won !  
The clay that moulds the heart of man,  
Bears not a nobler flower  
Than Meekness, which could thus unlock  
The grasping hand of Power.

## THE BIRD OF FAERY LAND.



[The conjecture of Pope that the robin owes his status as the bird-pet of our firesides to the honourable mention made of him in "The Babes of the Wood," does not seem to have a very deep foundation. More probably the idea of employing this particular songster in the gentle office of covering the dead bodies of two ill-fated children, was suggested to the kind-hearted ballad-maker by this hospitable observance, even then existing. It is also probable that the observance itself belongs to an early mythology, in which the robin might have been one of those connecting links our ancestors were so fond of forming between this world and the spiritual world unseen. The harsh treatment of the yellowhammer, which would be otherwise unaccountable, corroborates this opinion; for the yorling is as fine a creature as the other, but there is a drop of devil's-blood on its head and the peasant boy would gladly see the whole race extirpated.

It is unfortunate that in denouncing superstition the evils on which we expatiate are such as would attend its resuscitation, instead of those that were really induced by its existence. We have huddled together the beautiful remains of a rude, but earnest and—in the best sense of the word—homely faith, under so hideous a name that, afraid of investigating, we content ourselves with a general deprecation, and are in truth superstitious for fear of being thought so.

In the two following poems—where the bird in one is a fairy and in the other a spirit—I have endeavoured to exemplify one of the purposes these myths were made to serve.]

On, fair is Faëry-land,  
And the fields whaur I was roaming,  
For the skies of Faëry-land  
Are days without a gloaming!

The dun-deer's foot is fleet,  
But the elfin-foot is fleeter;  
The mountain air is sweet,  
But faëry-breath is sweeter.

His world has hillocks green,  
And no ploughshare can wrang them;  
And he loves his hillocks green,  
For there's no ae grave amang them!

My wing is weet and chill  
Beneath your cloudy carey,  
And I've come against my will  
Frae the pleasant land of Faëry;

Ye have called me by a spell  
Into your world sae dreary,  
Pale, heart-sick youth, to tell  
The tidings o' thy dearie.

## YOUTH.

Then tell me, bonny bird,  
Whaur is the fause heart roaming?

## BIRD.

With Errington's young lord  
She spends the summer gloaming.

## YOUTH.

But what wiled her frae me?—  
What takes she a' her pride in?



BIRD.

The hope of high degree  
And a bonny coach to ride in !

YOUTH.

And is her ee as clear ?  
Her cheek, is't aye as smiling ?

BIRD.

Ah, no ! she learns to fear  
And feel her lord's beguiling.

YOUTH.

But, birdie, when the neist  
Spring-flower unfaulds its blossom—

BIRD.

There's a baby at her breast,  
And the worm within her bosom !

YOUTH.

And will the fause lord grieve  
That he trained her hopes to wither ?

BIRD.

Ah, no ! he'll yet deceive  
Another, and another.

## YOUTH.

And what shall be my doom  
For loving her so dearly?

## BIRD.

The heart-break and the tomb—  
A could, could grave ower early!

---

## PEGGY RAMSAY.

## I.

A birdie sits in yon kirk-yard—  
A strange wee bird is he,  
For a' the summer-time he sat  
Upon the willow tree :  
And aye he sits and sair he greets  
And sings most mournfully—  
My bonny Peggy Ramsay,  
O what has gar'd ye dee !

## II.

I chose the mournfu' willow tree  
To hear my notes of wae ;  
Its lang leaves hingin' ower me,  
Hae withered or their day ;

Already they've begun to fa',  
There's naething lives wi' me—  
My bonny Peggy Ramsay,  
O what has gar'd ye dee !

## III.

I loved a flower—a little flower—  
And warbled for its sake ;  
Thought I nae storm was rude enough  
The gentle stalk to break ;  
I flew awa', and gathered moss  
To big my nestie wi'—  
My bonny Peggy Ramsay,  
O what has gar'd you dee !

## IV.

Her e'en were like twa beads o' dew,  
Or violets flung on snaw—  
They never shed a bitter tear  
Till Airlie gaed awa' ;  
The smile fell frae her wan cheek,  
Her love was on the sea—  
My bonny Peggy Ramsay,  
O what has gar'd ye dee !

## V.

She doesna ken her Airlie's voice,  
Nor hear his spirit pine ;  
The green, green grass is on her breast,  
The green, green wave on mine ;

My bonny Peggy Ramsay,  
My joe, my joy was she—  
But, O my Peggy Ramsay,  
What could hae gar'd ye dee !

---

## SONG.

~~~~~

O, GIN I were whaur Gadie rins,  
Whaur Gadie rins, whaur Gadie rins ;  
Or she that dwells whaur Gadie rins—  
O, gin she were wi' me !

It's no the hill, though it be brave—  
It's no the sowf o' Gadie's wave—  
But she that blumed ower a' the lave,  
And gae her thochts to me.  
O, gin I were, &c.

O Jeanie, is the glen as gay ?  
Has Gadie yet as sweet a say ?  
Is yon brown hill the same auld brae,  
And naething changed but we ?  
O, gin I were, &c.

I mind, when, if my wanderin' e'e  
Got but a blink o' Benachie,  
It seemed a look o' love frae thee—

A look o' love frae thee!

O, gin I were, &c.

We haena met this mony year,  
My heart is deider grown, I fear;  
But, oh, the memories are dear

That come frae Benachie!

O, gin I were, &c.

---

## BONNY ROTHIE MAY.

~~~~~

I.

Come back, come back, ye gowden dream!

And leavena me so bare;

Ye werena o' the deid, dark things

That sometimes haunt my lair.

I met her by the spruce-tree's shade,

But wha I winna say;

Whaur Deveron bends his mossy stream,

Round bonny Rothiemay.

## II.

There was a breast—but it is sad ;  
An eye—but it is gane—  
O Memory, cease—ye canna turn  
The living heart to stane !  
Though ilka worth-warm heart was gane,  
(But God forbid the day!)  
My fondest thoughts would linger lang  
On bonny Rothiemay.

---

## HYMN TO DEATH.



## I.

DEATH, darkness, terror—night without a star,  
From which as from a fiend the racer flies ;  
Death, calmness, peace—the peace that follows war,  
The race's goal, but surely not its prize !  
Unto this final curtain we have given  
Such colouring of Fear and sullen Pride,  
That though the drapery hides the face of Heaven  
We dare not push the painted thing aside,  
But carry into all our businesses  
A dream of pending scaith :  
The worst of ills from which thou freest us is  
This very fear of death !

## II.

Death, when we see thee ushering a soul  
Into the presence-chamber of its God,  
Serves it no better purpose than to roll  
Sorrow's eye-waters from their dark abode ?  
Yes ; in thy breathless, sabbath-eve-like quiet  
We hear the murmur of the eternal sea ;  
And, when the heart's beat and the pulse's riot  
Are quelled beside us, learn to live for thee—  
To own thy net well-laid and hold our breath,  
Standing beside the mesh  
As silent as if monuments of Death  
Sculptured in living flesh !

## III.

But when our friends compeer to ask our ail  
And shake their heads, it seemeth hard to go ;  
To leave Life's green and almost happy vale,  
Impressed with all our footsteps to and fro !  
And when we stand beside the sullen river,  
Whose cold, deep waters never shone in day,  
It is not marvellous that the soul should shiver  
Before she plungeth and departs for aye ;  
For why ? As rottenness makes earth's dull parts  
More fruitful, even so  
The seeds of Death are in us, but our heart's  
Corruption makes them grow !

## THE WEDDING OF BIRKENSHAW.

~~~~~

O touch a bairn wi' bairn-like hand !  
For, nonrice, ye sall learn  
How surely God repays a wrang  
Committed on a bairn.  
The buds themselves are Heaven's, and Heaven  
Gives that which makes them flowers ;  
The garden-plot from which they spring—  
Our hearths—alone are ours.

~~~~~

The marriage-feast was in the ha'  
With more than marriage-glee ;  
For all are met but the portly priest,  
And wherefore tarries he ?  
A gentle rap came to the door,  
The bridegroom turneth pale ;  
“ It is the priest,” quo' the wedding-guest,  
“ And doth the bridegroom quail ?”



“ And if I quail, ye merry men,  
It’s no at mortal man,  
But there’s ane behind the door, me fears,  
Wad gar ye a’ look wan.”  
Anither rap cam’ to the door,  
The sweat brak’ frae his bree,  
And a’ the wedding-guests ran out  
But naething might they see.

“ There are fearsome things, ye merry men,  
Abroad—me fears—to-night ;  
God sain us, when the dead arise  
To hear our wedding plight !”  
Anither rap cam’ to the door,  
Wi’ a heavy, heavy clang—  
The wedding-guests were mute enough,  
But ha’ an’ haddin’ rang !

“ Ye’ll blame me sair, ye merry men,  
To leave my winsome bride,  
But lifeless things will get a tongue  
Gin here I langer bide !”  
The bridegroom hurried to the door  
While a’ the lamps grew dim—  
The wedding-guests were much amazed,  
But nane looked after him.

A spirit, that a lady seemed,  
Ran tripping up the stair :  
The bridal-chamber richly dight,  
And in he followed there.

“ Ye’ve lang forgot me, Birkenshaw,  
I’ve not forgotten you ;  
For, change the living as they will,  
The dead are ever true !  
Your eyes grow large with earnestness,  
Nae mair they’ll look on me ;  
Ere the cock craw I’ll be awa’,  
Far over land and sea.

“ I dinna claim the virgin lock  
Ye severed frae my brow—  
Ye wore it like a jewel lang,  
Whaure’er ye hae it now.  
I dinna come to claim the land,  
That was my tocher-fee ;  
Although ye gae your love to it,  
Your hand alone to me.

“ Nor do I come on such a night  
To upbraid your marriage-mirth,  
Your hand was free when it had let  
My body to the earth.  
But I hae left the ha’s o’ heaven,  
A sadder truth to learn ;  
To ask ye why I’ve met sae soon  
The spirit of my bairn,  
And raise a fiend that winna lay  
In your hard heart of airn !

“ There’s bleid npon your hand, ill man,  
Its vengeance on your heid,  
For the huge charter of your woe  
Is writ in baby-bleid.

My brother John frae sainted lands  
Comes bounding o’er the brine,  
And Heaven’s hand shall further him,  
A knight of Palestine ;

“ And he’ll be lord of Birkenshaw,  
When ye rin wud and wild—  
No for the bride ye’ve gien yoursel’,  
But for my murdered child !”  
The bridegroom hurried down the stair,  
Unwitting where he ran ;  
He hung his heid, and gae his hand,  
And was a wedded man.

And aye sin’ syne as that day comes,  
The saddest of the year,  
The hall is filled with sight and sound  
Of ghastly wedding-cheer ;  
And aye before the silent morn,  
The menials can discern  
’Mang mony earthless eerie sounds  
The greetin’ of a bairn.

## A CAROL OF THE CONTENTED.



BELIEVE me, this warld's no sae ill as it's ca'd,  
And the hearts that are on it are seldom sae bad;  
It has losses and crosses and mony a scaur,  
But fowk should be thankfu'—it might hae been  
waur.

We have auld wives to scauld us whenever we sin,  
And young anes to tempt us, and dear anes to win;  
And though life may be rough, yet the maid or the  
man  
That hae taen's by the heart may yet tak's by the  
han'.

For daffin' and gabbin' whase tongue was like Meg's,  
A glaikit young quean as e'er stood on twa legs?  
And as canty a callant as ever ye saw  
Was Jocky when Meg's fickle fancy he staw:

But the lassie begeekit him—what'll ye say ?  
Fowk should just lat the warld wag on as it may—  
But Jock wadna bear it, but swore in a fit  
He wad dee the neist day—though he's living aye  
yet!

The lassie gaed aff and the laddie gaed gyte,  
The haill parish ken't it and gae her the wyte ;  
And he bought a bit whittle to nick his bit craig,  
For ram-stam, through-ither, hallucket Meg.

But a packman came in with a weel-stockit pack  
Just as poor Johnny's test'ment was—ready to mak' ;  
So he tries on a hair if the whittle was gleg,  
And—trocks't for a ribbon to hallucket Meg.

And next to the green-wud in sorrow gaed he  
To cleeck himsel' up to the tap o' a tree,  
But a burn on the road-side poor Joeky fell in—  
And wha's fit for business when soak'd to the skin ?

Then he gaed to the kirk, and what did he there  
But sat like a heathen—the time o' the prayer,  
Wi' his hose like a raip at the mou's o' his shoon,  
And his bauchels gaun a'way and a'thing but duene.

The minister's sermons were awfu'-like screeds,  
For sometimes the monsters had seventeen heads :  
The maist o' fouk sleepit, but Jock sat fu' gleg,  
For wha does he spy but his auld cummer Meg !

They sent for the parson, but he could do naething;  
They sent for the doctor, and he did but ae thing—  
He brought an assistant—Miss Maggie cam' ben,  
And now they hae sent for the parson again.

Then live and laugh on, boy, and ne'er be the carle  
That seeks by a short-cut to reach the next warl';  
If times should be cloudy, why, clear up your brow,  
And laugh at auld Care and he'll soon laugh at you!

---

## LINES

WRITTEN ON ATTENDING AN AGRICULTURAL DINNER  
AT WHICH MR. DUFF OF HADDO PRESIDED.

---

WE met ower a bowl o' bliss sae fou  
That it held nae drap o' sorrow,  
And spent an evening to hope sae true  
That it left nae pang for the morrow.

And wha was it sat at our blithe board-en'  
But the gude Gudeman o' Haddo,  
Wha flang sic a licht round us a', that nicht,  
That it left nae corner in shadow.

Oh, his is a Witchery that never should cease—  
An Art that has no misgiving,  
That leaveth the dead to rest in peace,  
But raises the spirits o' the living !

We hae met before at rant and splore,  
When Joy led on the chorus,  
And we'll meet again the blither men  
For an evening like this before us !

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## HADDO.

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### I.

I KEN whaur Spring comes farthest ben  
And leaves her sweetest flowers,  
I ken whaur Summer seems to tine  
Her way among the bowers,  
Whaur Beauty has her biding-place,  
And Worth his proudest ha'—  
O Haddo banks and Haddo bowers,  
Weel may I love them a' !

### II.

The water bends around the scene  
As bridegroom clasps his bride ;  
The lang grass flings its fingers lean  
Across the rippling tide,

As if it felt for music whaur  
Nae harper's hand could fa' :—  
O Haddo banks and Haddo bowers,  
Weel may I love them a' !

## III.

There's mony a green and leafy bield  
To dit the cauld warl's een,  
There's mony a true and trusty heart  
That doesna need a screen ;  
The face of heaven, the siller beam  
A sweeter spot ne'er saw—  
O Haddo banks and Haddo bowers,  
Weel may I love them a' !

## IV.

Then never, never come a tear  
To dim yon diamond e'e !  
And never an ungentle throe  
In yon fair bosom be !  
For, oh, whaur blessings are sae rife  
Grief's shadow shouldna fa' !  
But Haddo banks and Haddo bowers,  
High heaven should love them a' !



## SUPERSTITION.



[In the following fragment I have endeavoured to bring out a great truth, viz : that Superstition was one of the phases of civilization. Of course, I exclude the raw-head-and-bloody-bones Monster of the Inquisition, for the same reason that in delineating the monarchic character, one would not make use of the materials furnished by the cruelties and caprices of Nero or Caligula. Accordingly, in a few examples, I have attempted to show what were some of the good works produced by that Faith which we are wont to call Superstition ; for, as mentioned in a former part of the volume, it is inaccurate and unwarranted to argue that, because a certain amount of evil would attend the revival of a creed, the same amount attended its healthy existence.

THE old observances, the presence—felt,  
But never questioned, the ghost-haunt of guilt,  
The shadowy sweep of forms at fall of night,  
When faith awoke and dictated to sight—  
Are obsolete and happily, yet they  
Did virtue excellent service in their day.

O Superstition, though denounced by all  
That think most wisely as a godless thrall,

Our fathers knew thee by a better name,  
And kept the faith; their children may defame  
But not deflower thee, for beneath thy stole  
Beat a warm heart and shone the instructed soul.

There are two evils—let us bring them out  
Unshrinkingly—credulity and doubt:  
“The men that were,” a rude but brawny race  
Of minds, with them belief was an embrace,\*  
And did imply a warmth which none will scout,  
Till blinded by the icy glare of Doubt,  
Or deadened by its most unfeeling cold;  
For what green branch of hope—what honest hold  
Of bliss to be—what kind presentiment  
Does it to wrecked humanity present?

A mighty spirit is departed: few  
Have been so potent and so gentle too.  
Its gentleness, we know, has been denied,  
The potent spirit vilely vilified;  
But of its enemies the whole we ask  
Is that they bring a reverence to their task:  
Dissection is the task, and—be it said—  
We should not judge the living by the dead.  
Yet they that hack and mangle it to detect  
A poison, and to show some dire effect  
Of blind belief, their toil, they will allow,  
Is a *post-mortem* operation now.  
But vain the attempt and misapplied the pains  
To trace its real form in its remains;

\* Let the reader (that is, the gentle reader) think for a moment how inappropriate such a phrase, as—“He embraced the philosophy of Hume.”

A bone, a cere-cloth, or a little dust  
Are often the remains to which we trust,  
Though all we know is that so huge a bone  
Must have belonged once to a Mastodon.

The fine old fancy of the Fay is fled :  
What has it left us better in its stead ?  
Gay were the trappings, verdant the resort,  
And rich the bountith of the Elfin court ;  
'Twas something to etherialize our hills,  
To make us find a music in their rills,  
And love the green sod where young streamlets start  
With their springs dancing in it like a heart !  
In wood and glen they waged a merry strife  
With all the sour realities of life ;  
A freshness rose where'er their footsteps pressed,  
Whose antetype was in the faith-full breast.

We grant that wizard-faith hath been indeed  
A most pernicious, a most poisonous weed ;  
But, gentle reader, turn aside to see  
Its antidote in yonder rowan-tree.  
How beautiful a growth ! how fine a shade !  
How gracefully it holds its comely head !  
Its ruddy clusters, nestling here and there,  
That gleam like blossoms wreathed in Beauty's hair,  
How grateful when the droughty autumn gapes  
To schoolboy's lip ! they are the schoolboy's grapes,  
And, though displayed on the tree's loftiest limb,  
Ne'er inaccessible or sour to him !  
Few farm-steads want such ornaments, yet they  
Rose in a coarsely-calculating day,

When What's-the-use? was all the answer made  
To those that urged the planting of a shade.  
Then, Superstition, thine was the address  
To introduce the tree of loveliness;  
Then the rude farm, itself untaught to deck,  
First wore around its erst-unlovely neck  
This amulet of Beauty,—and the blast,  
Witch-ridden though it was, went scaithless past!

In yonder cot, so rich with eglantine,  
Long has old Elspet lived and “made no sign;”  
Her little house is pulseless, for the stir  
Of life has ceased to involve or interest her.  
But, out on wicked change! the time hath been  
When Elspet's cottage showed another scene,  
When all day long she sat and span the thread  
That brought, and amply brought, her daily bread;  
Together hummed her wheel, her cat, and she—  
The light rose never on a blither three.  
Then factories came and spoiled the spinner's art,  
And bore right hard on many an honest heart;  
The sound of Elspet's spinning-wheel was gone,  
But Elspet and her tabby friend sang on.  
Well, time advanced; the cottage grandame's curse  
Made nothing but the venter's temper worse;  
Nay, bread was got as usual for the winning,  
And willing hands found other work than spinning;  
But Elspet's neighbours, other tales believing,  
Had time for naught save counselling and grieving.  
She never met them; factories, they said,  
Had either broke her heart or turned her head.

But Elspet's heart lay in her milkiest side,  
And, more, her pantry was too well supplied,  
Her house too neat, too trim its eglantine  
To be possessed by one that could repine :  
The sun, in short, might lose his way as soon  
As tabby or her mistress lose a tune !  
The pitying gossips, shocked to find her rich,  
Shook their wise heads and—Elspet was a witch.  
The inference was natural ; and some  
Discovered they had never liked her hum,  
While others would have only hinted *that*  
Had not her cat looked something more than eat.  
The philosophic twain, for all this wrong,  
Never appear to have lost the wonted song.  
The good old maid—for Elspet kept her fame  
And ne'er had changed, nor sighed to change, her  
name—

Had a sweet garden-plot to work upon,  
And made its face as smiling as her own.  
She raised the old turf-wall, o'er which in time  
The investing ivy hiding all did climb ;  
Fresh flowers she planted, and the old ones grew  
Beneath her hand as beautiful as new,  
And 'twas her boast—no empty one indeed—  
For years her garden had not raised a weed,  
Unless—as she would add in sober tone—  
No weed, unless that she herself was one.  
It happened, ere the harvest-sheaf was tied,  
That some of Elspet's Spring defamers died,  
And hence with awe her latch the peasant lifts,  
Even when he brings propitiatory gifts ;

And when the bell tolls from the house of prayer—  
For Sunday never comes but Elspet's there—  
Her scarlet cloak that glows without a stain,  
(Displaced by russet when she looks for rain,)  
That flings a warmth on every cheek that passes—  
Gets many a courteous look from lads and lasses;  
For none will pass, elsewhere however rude,  
Without inquiring how her health has stood;  
The rustics, one by one collecting, put  
Each the same question with his best salute,  
And one by one the same reply receives,  
Making all glad—for Elspet never grieves.  
Then, ah! how well the bridal maidens know  
Where all the finest flowers and fairest blow;  
And, with the bridegroom's favours tendered sly,  
Buy them with gifts that do not seem to buy,  
That aid her comfort yet revere her pride,  
And win best blessings for the happy bride.  
Thus have the rustic superstitions grown  
Round one whose worth had made her walk alone,  
And, with the unknown-propitiatory fee,  
Secured her humble cot from penury—  
Thus twines the ivy o'er the garden-wall,  
Which else had now been nodding to its fall.

No rite, except the marriage-service, now  
Seems strong enough to guard a lover's vow;  
Of yore, the trysting-tree would witness oaths  
And broken rings,\* but seldom broken troths.

\* See the account of Burns' last interview with Highland Mary.

Neighbours made contracts when they met alone,  
And sought no witness save an earth-fast stone;†  
Such contracts now in guarded terms we draw,  
And muse instinctively on Courts of Law.

Then the rude poet, whom a little care  
Had ripened to—or even beyond—a Clare,  
Essayed with rough but earnest hand to trace  
The lineaments of Nature's honest face.  
He walked the sea-shore with a sounding heart,  
And loved all things—though not by rule of art :  
The mountain's almost-intellectual brow ;  
The lonely dell that hears the lover's vow ;  
The humble cot, when lovers cease to roam ;  
The lowing herd that even-tide brings home ;  
The old grey rocks that lift their bald heads high ;  
The stars like dew-drops sprinkled o'er the sky ;  
The moon whose very brightness makes her lone ;  
The deep blue waters that she shines upon !  
Earth's lifeless is not her most earthly part ;  
No sea, hill, stream has in itself a heart,  
(And let our healthiest bards this truth attest,)  
Because it beats within a poet's breast !

But how in a rude age would he express  
That sixth best sense—his sense of loveliness ?  
Most likely in some tale for Hallow-e'en,  
Of shapes too glorious to be often seen,  
Haunting the sweetest nook of glen or wood,  
And waving mortals from the solitude.

† A fact.

Aghast the humless circle hear him tell—  
And shudder at each heart-felt syllable—  
Of her, the spirit of the cloudy car,  
Whose eyes are sparks struck from a midnight star ;  
Her words—who listen live not half their days,  
Her steeds—the souls of them that rashly gaze ;  
And as we know the lark has mounted by  
A line of music quavering in the sky,  
So from the music of her chariot-wheels,  
Which may be heard when sleepy twilight steals  
Her silken lashes o'er the eye of day,  
'Tis known the spirit-lady soars away.  
A peasant here corroborates the tale  
Unheard before, and waxeth wondrous pale,  
For he hath heard unwittingly the strain,  
And never hopes to be himself again.  
Ingenious Bard, thou didst not mean this wrong,  
For thou canst tell who sings that evening song !

\* \* \* \* \*



## THE AULD KIRK O' SCOTLAND.

~~~~~

The gude auld Kirk o' Scotland !  
The wild winds round her blaw,  
And when her foemen hear their sough  
They prophesy her fa' ;  
But what although her fate has been  
Amang the floods to sit—  
The gude auld Kirk o' Scotland,  
She's nae in ruins yet !

There may be wrath within her wa's,—  
What reck ! her wa's are wide ;  
It's but the beating of a heart,  
The rushing of a tide,  
Whose motion keeps its waters pure :—  
Then let them foam or fret,  
The gude auld Kirk o' Scotland,  
She's nae in ruins yet !

She was a lithe, she was a licht,  
When a'thing else was mirk,  
And mony a trembling heart has found  
Its bield behind the Kirk !  
She bore the brunt and did her due,  
When Scotland's sword was wet,  
The gude auld Kirk o' Scotland,  
She's nae in ruins yet !

The clouds that overcast her sky  
Maun shortly flit awa',  
A bonny, blue, and peacefu' heaven  
Smiles sweetly through them a' !  
Her country's life-blood's in her veins,  
The wide warl's in her debt !  
The gude auld Kirk o' Scotland,  
She's nae in ruins yet !

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## HAPPINESS.

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THE heart that seeks for happiness  
In beauty, grandeur, lore,  
Must leave them all in turn, like one  
That begs from door to door.  
Oh, but he walks a weary round,  
And follows a sad dance !  
I reach my home a nearer road,  
And go to God at once !

## CONSUMPTION.



## I.

WE wandered on : the summer-wind was flying to  
the North ;  
The hawthorn like a censer swung and flang its  
incense forth ;  
We heard the cuckoo's spirit-voice walking the  
woods among  
In sad-sweet dual melody—a blossom-burst of song ;  
And every living thing was glad—nay, even life-  
less things  
Were not so dead but that they lived in our ima-  
ginings.

## II.

When next I trod the same green path, the eve  
was fair and still,  
The young moon backward bent—like one that goeth  
down a hill,

But now I wandered all alone in pleasure's very  
dearth,  
For *she* was gone behind the veil that hideth hea-  
ven from earth ;  
And every fair, familiar haunt to eye, and soul,  
and heart,  
Did seem in kindness to have lost its beautifullest  
part ;  
For well I wot this gay, green earth, with bird,  
and flower, and tree,  
Shall never, never more appear the same old world  
to me !

## III.

Consumption ! when I hear the word it makes me  
hold my breath !  
Oh, hide its hideousness behind its synonyme of  
death !  
It hath a lover's eye to make the beautiful its prize,  
And yet the strength of Death's right hand to  
fasten where it flies.  
It cometh like an angel-shape, all loveliness and  
bloom,  
And Hope, high Hope is in its train, that speaks  
not of the tomb,  
But whispers words of life even when the upward-  
rolling eye  
Betrays its near relationship to yon half-open sky !

## IV.

I saw its hand on Isabelle—God, give me any care,  
But save me from the second sight of seeing aught  
so fair !

That cheek, by turns so finely flushed and spiritual-  
ly wan,

Was too, too heavenly for earth—too beautiful for  
man !

I saw when first her trouble came—I saw she  
would not stay,

I knew that seraphs o'er her hung, and wooed her  
soul away:

We gave her spirit to its God, her body to the  
worm—

Heaven never got a purer soul, nor earth a fairer  
form ;

Her day was cloudless to the last, and set most  
gloriously—

Great God, we have an angel less by giving one to  
Thee !

## SONNET.

ADDRESSED TO AN HONOURED LADY, ON THE DEATH  
OF HER ONLY DAUGHTER.



LADY, I've thought upon thy grief, and tried  
To think of aught that makes affliction meet,—  
Of Christ who all life-long was crucified,  
And of the many sufferings that complete  
The Christian, hence ; and then I've thought how  
sweet  
It is to have, among the Seraph-eyed,  
An eye that looketh from the golden street  
Of heaven and calls thee Mother—and to know  
Thy child, by death brought to ripe age at once,  
Has entered on her high inheritance :  
Such thoughts as these would not let grief o'erflow,  
But that its coming is so unaware—  
Ah, God be gracious ! what a world of woe  
The gentle heart is sometimes forced to bear !



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